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# **MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT IN CONTEMPORARY GUINEA-BISSAU: A POLITICAL ECONOMY APPROACH**

ALEXANDRE JOSÉ GERMANO DE ABREU

Thesis submitted for the degree of PhD in Economics

2012

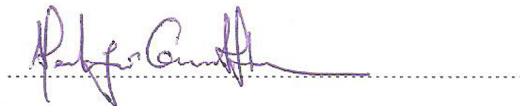
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## Abstract

This thesis addresses the issue of the linkages between migration and development, taking Guinea-Bissau – a small West African country with a long and multi-layered history of internal and international migration – as a country-level case-study. It adopts a structural, political-economic approach, whereby “development” is understood first and foremost as involving qualitative changes in social-productive relations (i.e. the extant combination of modes of production and its associated class structure). In a context like Guinea-Bissau, looking at the migration-development nexus from this perspective entails looking in particular at the relationships between migration and the processes of commodification and class formation in the agrarian space.

The thesis is divided into two parts. Part I discusses the key theoretical foundations of the research and is divided into three chapters: theories of migration; theoretical perspectives on economic development and change; and theoretical approaches to the migration-development nexus. Then, Part II presents the case-study of Guinea-Bissau, including an introductory chapter on research methods; a macro-level analysis of migration and development in Guinea-Bissau based on secondary evidence; and two ‘nested’ village-level case-studies that assess and illustrate features and tendencies at the micro-level, based on primary data collected by the author. The latter include the results of a survey of 108 households, complemented by focus groups and semi-structured interviews, undertaken in Caiomete (a Manjaco village in Northern Guinea-Bissau) and Braima Sori (a Fula village in Eastern Guinea-Bissau).

We conclude that Guinea-Bissau has been undergoing significant political-economic changes, not least in terms of the commodification of subsistence, but that significant obstacles remain in place preventing a fuller transition to the capitalist mode of production and subsequent expanded accumulation. Migration, while central to the livelihoods of many migrants, families and communities of origin, seems limited in its ability to overcome those obstacles and catalyse development in a more fundamental sense.

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## Acronyms and abbreviations

AEDES – Agence Européenne pour le Développement et la Santé  
BCEAO – Banque Centrale des États de l’Afrique de l’Ouest  
EEC – European Economic Community  
EU – European Union  
FAO – Food and Agriculture Organization  
GDP – Gross Domestic Product  
GRDR – Groupe de Recherche et de Réalisations pour le Développement Rural  
HTA – Hometown Association  
HWWI – Hamburgisches WeltWirtschaftsinstitut  
INEP – Instituto Nacional de Estudos e Pesquisa  
INSEE – Institut National de la Statistique et des Études Économiques  
ILO – International Labour Organization  
IMF – International Monetary Fund  
IOM – International Organization for Migration  
MEDR – Ministério da Economia e Desenvolvimento Regional  
MEPIR – Ministério da Economia, do Plano e da Integração Regional  
MIDA – Migration for Development in Africa  
NGO – Non-Governmental Organisation  
OECD – Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development  
PAIGC – Partido Africano da Independência da Guiné e Cabo Verde  
PCA – Principal Component Analysis  
PNUD – Programme des Nations Unies pour le Développement  
PPP – Purchasing Power Parity  
PRS – Partido da Renovação Social  
SCMR – Sussex Centre for Migration Research  
SEF – Serviço de Estrangeiros e Fronteiras  
SOCOMIN – Sociedade Comercial e Industrial da Guiné-Bissau  
UN – United Nations  
UNDP – United Nations Development Programme  
US\$ – United States Dollars  
WBDI – World Bank Development Indicators  
WFP – World Food Programme

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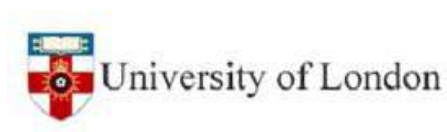
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*TO MY PARENTS*



# 1. Introduction

*Migration is the oldest action against poverty. It selects those who most want help. It is good for the country to which they go; it helps break the equilibrium of poverty in the country from which they come. What is the perversity in the human soul that causes people to resist so obvious a good?*

John Kenneth Galbraith (1979), *The Nature of Mass Poverty*

*They are the light infantry of capital, thrown by it, according to its needs, now to this point, now to that. When they are not in march, they camp.*

Karl Marx (1982[1867]), *Capital*, Vol. 1

*No matter what reality we consider in the world or in life, however great or small, it always forms part of another reality, is integrated in another reality, is affected by other realities, which in turn have an effect in or on other realities. So our land of Guiné and Cape Verde, and our struggle, form part of a greater reality that is affected by and affects other realities in the world.*

Amílcar Cabral (1979), *Unity and Struggle: Speeches and Writings*

## 1.1 Setting the scene

They have “marched”, they have “camped” and many have settled. In Bissau’s popular districts; on the outskirts of Lisbon, or in temporary housing units next to construction sites throughout Portugal; in French harbour cities; in Ziguinchor, Dakar and The Gambia; and increasingly in Cape Verde, Spain, the United Kingdom and elsewhere. Many are construction workers, cleaners or traders. Others are medical doctors or teachers – or relatives who joined previous movers. Some return regularly to their country, or to their village. Others plan to do so once they have put enough money on the side, or to be buried in their hometowns after passing on. They are extremely diverse – more so than the previous lines could possibly illustrate. What they have in common: they are all Bissau-Guineans who have sought to improve their lives by moving somewhere else to live.

Not all of them did it primarily in search of better employment or income opportunities: some did it to escape the war, political persecution, or local settings regarded as oppressive. The majority, however, has followed J. K. Galbraith's dictum by taking one of the oldest actions against poverty. Those who moved to other countries make up a small part of a global contingent of international migrants that, depending on the perspective, may be variously regarded as immense – an estimated 214 million in 2010<sup>1</sup>, amounting to what would be the fifth largest country in the world –, or as relatively small – a mere 3% of the world's population. Whichever way we choose to regard it, however, there is no doubt that those who moved while remaining within the borders of their country, particularly from rural areas and into Bissau and other smaller cities, are part of what has been an even more massive global phenomenon: internal migration and urbanisation. In reality, the two can hardly be separated: internal and international migration are but two varieties of the same process, with similar actors, similar causes and analogous consequences.

The individual motivations and subsequent trajectories of each of these millions of people – in contemporary Guinea-Bissau or otherwise – make for rich, diverse and illuminating accounts. However, they only tell a part of the story, for those motivations and trajectories arise as a consequence of the social, economic, political and cultural contexts in which people find themselves. It is the increasing pace and depth of the changes affecting people's lives that is to account for the increasing pace of their reactions, including migration. Migration may be the oldest action against poverty and date back to early human history, but it has certainly taken on different characteristics, and a whole new quantitative dimension, in the last few centuries. Not coincidentally, those have also been the centuries of capitalism.

As it swept across and subjected an increasing portion of the geographical and social worlds, capitalism – a relatively recent reality in the history of humankind – has substituted relentless change for relative stability. It has done so through the quest by human actors to improve their material situation and shape the world around them, driven by such powerful forces as competition, ideology or the will to survive. And in so doing it has always and everywhere drawn on a fundamental ingredient: human labour. Capitalism has thus changed the character and significance of migration profoundly because, on the one hand, it has uprooted people by the millions by bringing about fundamental changes to

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<sup>1</sup> Source: <http://esa.un.org/migration/>

their livelihoods and, on the other hand, because of its inherent requirement that labour and capital meet and combine. The quotes by J. K. Galbraith and Karl Marx in the beginning of this chapter may therefore be considered complementary: while Galbraith stresses the deep historical roots of migration as a human practice and social phenomenon (as well as the fundamentally nocuous character of the attempts to forcefully curb it), Marx adds more historical and political nuance by highlighting its relation to capitalism in the contemporary epoch.

People choose or are driven to migrate in reaction to changes in the structure of opportunities and constraints around them. Then, in their turn, they contribute to changing that structure by changing the resources, including knowledge and power, available to others. The ways in which this occurs are not unilinear but complex, and have justifiably attracted scientific scrutiny – never more so than in the past two or three decades, as a consequence of the increasing intensity and significance of the linkages between migrants and their areas of origin. This has been made possible by social and technological developments that have replaced dichotomous either-or forms of socio-spatial belonging with simultaneous and trans-local, sometimes transnational, ones – a turn in social life that has in its turn called forth a methodological trans-local or transnational turn in this field of the social sciences (Levitt 2004).

The changes thus introduced to the areas of origin of the migrants – whether caused by actions (e.g. sending money or information back to relatives) or omissions (e.g. a reduction in the labour supply due to the migrants' absence) – occur simultaneously with other processes of change, driven by other phenomena, with which they interact. Typically, such changes take on an incremental, quantitative character; at times, however, quantity turns into quality, and more radical and sweeping transformations occur. Such is the character of historical development, at least according to the historical materialist perspective – incremental, quantitative change punctuated by qualitative leaps and bounds into the hitherto inexistent.

The prime mover of the process of historical development, again according to the historical materialist perspective, consists of the material conditions of human (by necessity social) life. Humans organise themselves socially to transform the world around them, thereby producing and reproducing their social lives. They do this by drawing on a given but constantly-changing set of available resources and technologies and, equally crucially, within a given but constantly-changing space of social relations that comprises

institutionalised social roles, behaviours, property arrangements, norms, claims, and expectations. These, too, can change either quantitatively and incrementally or, at times, radically and qualitatively. At a very high level of abstraction, these sets of social and technical opportunities and constraints are what are called *modes of production*. They have powerful consequences, as exemplified by the revolutionising of social life brought about by capitalism to which we alluded above. Each mode of production, with its constituent set of social-productive relations, constrains people to behave in certain ways, thereby causing history to move forward in more or less stagnant or progressive manners.

In the meantime, what we find in the concrete are not the abstract modes of production, but concrete social arrangements that may combine the logics and dynamics of different modes of production. At the current stage in human history, this is especially true of those social and geographical contexts where capitalism co-exists with other social-productive logics that maintain a significant presence, not having yet been swept to the side and confined to historical memory. Not coincidentally, these correspond to what are usually called *developing* countries or regions. They are indeed developing, for they are undergoing massively significant changes, including one that is qualitative and momentous: a *transition* from the predominance of non-capitalist logics to the co-existence and articulation of capitalist and non-capitalist arrangements, to the eventual uncontested dominance of the capitalist mode of production in its concrete manifestations.

This process has taken far longer to complete than predicted or expected by early historical materialist writers – or perhaps we simply do not have the historical perspective to properly appreciate the speed of contemporary phenomena in the historical *longue durée*. While it may have so far proven to be a general and overwhelming tendency, the aforementioned transition is nonetheless faced with counter-tendencies, such that it may in fact appear in some instances to be absent or relatively stagnant. This does not invalidate the theory, however: it merely compels us to identify and appreciate the counter-tendencies at work.

This thesis proposes to contribute to the debate on the development consequences of migration – the so-called migration-development nexus – by placing itself at the intersection of two different scientific and intellectual traditions: the study of human migration and its determinants and effects, on the one hand; and the study of the historical development of human societies by focusing on their material and social-productive conditions and dynamics. The aim is to look beyond the merely incremental focus of most

scholarship in this field – especially within economics – and instead seek to contribute to a better understanding of the role of migration in the key historical transition currently facing the developing areas of origin of many migrants.

The pertinence of addressing this topic is justified by its sheer scale and the importance of its consequences. It is also corroborated by the considerable (and increasing) levels of both academic and political attention that the migration-development nexus has garnered, albeit in the vast majority of cases from different theoretical perspectives. Not that applying a historical materialist theoretical approach to this issue is original or unprecedented: as we shall see, there are significant prior contributions on which to draw from. In any case, much of the work remains to be done – many concrete historical contexts remain in which to appreciate the tendencies and counter-tendencies at work, to be followed by much subsequent effort at further theoretical development.

It is in this context that contemporary Guinea-Bissau – the case-study on which this research focuses – comes in: as a pertinent concrete (historical and geographical) context in which to assess how migration relates to development, and how history plays out as a result of the interplay of the tendencies and counter-tendencies at work. It is especially pertinent as a case-study insofar as it exhibits the two main features of interest to us: an as of yet largely non-capitalist setting in transition, characterised by an articulation of different social-productive arrangements; and a quantitatively and qualitatively significant history, and current levels, of migration. But leaving it at that would be to downplay the intrinsic interest and relevance of focusing on Guinea-Bissau *per se* – a country with a rich history, on which much high-quality scholarship has been produced and where much is at stake in the current political-economic context. It is therefore appropriate to end this section by calling forth the words of Amílcar Cabral, the great Bissau-Guinean independence leader and pan-Africanist thinker, in the third introductory quote to this chapter: the focus on the case of Guinea-Bissau should neither eclipse nor be eclipsed by attention to the wider issues and contexts that envelop it.

## **1.2 Key issues and concepts**

This thesis – and the research project of which it constitutes the material outcome – focuses on the political economy of migration and development in contemporary Guinea-Bissau. This is done by drawing on a specific theoretical framework to interrogate a specific

case-study, whose conclusions are then used to re-engage with the theoretical debates. The relevant theory for these purposes will be presented and discussed in the following chapters, but it is worth taking a moment at this early stage to further elaborate on what the key issues are, and to clarify some of the central concepts that we shall be mobilising. Not that concepts exist independently of theory or vice-versa; but it is both possible and useful to try and pin down, as precisely as possible, the meaning of a number of key concepts by drawing on only a limited amount of theory – and then proceed to discuss the theory in more detail.

This being a thesis in *political economy*, one should begin by rendering clear what is meant by the latter. This is less obvious than it might seem at first because of the fact that “political economy” has over time taken at least two different meanings, drawing on two different theoretical traditions. The meaning with which we are *not* concerned, and in fact explicitly reject, takes political economy to mean the study of phenomena deemed as ‘purely’ political – electoral outcomes, government actions and so forth – by drawing on ontological, methodological and theoretical foundations provided by (neoclassical) economics, at its most basic implying methodological individualism and rational-choice modelling of human behaviour. We could hardly be further from this perspective. First, because social phenomena are not regarded as separable into more or less ‘purely’ political, economic, cultural, etc. phenomena. Instead, politics is understood as the realm (and study) of power structures and relations, a key part of which are decisively determined by the ways and conditions in which human societies reproduce themselves materially (i.e. the economy). The second reason, on which we shall elaborate further in the following chapters, consists of the rejection of both methodological individualism and rational choice theory as adequate ways in which to pursue the study of social phenomena.

Thus, instead of the above, political economy is understood in the context of this thesis as an approach to the study of social phenomena that is based on the theoretical proposition that those phenomena are fundamentally influenced by, while possibly influencing as well, the way in which society is structured into *classes* and the ways in which this structure evolves. In their turn, social *classes*, within this theoretical framework, consist of social strata that are placed in different, indeed opposing, positions vis-à-vis each other with regard to the ownership of the means of production and the nature of their claims on the products of society’s labour. These class relations, within a given mode of production or combination of modes of production, are deemed the last-instance determinants of the socioeconomic trajectory, as well as of differential power endowments and political

conscience<sup>2</sup>. This is, therefore, an explicitly Marxist understanding of political economy – one which is directly derived from *historical materialism*, or the application of the dialectical materialist philosophical outlook to the study of historical social processes (Marx 1977[1859]<sup>3</sup>).

Despite having clarified some of the concepts as they were gradually introduced in the previous paragraphs, some important ones have been left unaccounted for. Thus, a *mode of production* is defined, following Hindess and Hirst (1975:9) as “an articulated combination of relations and forces of production structured by the dominance of the relations of production”. This is just a more rigorous, and perhaps slightly more opaque, way of formulating the definition that we have already introduced in the previous section: modes of production as coherent sets of resources, technologies and social relations. Modes of production, which are abstract realities, make themselves historically manifest in concrete *social-productive arrangements*, or concrete social and technical relations between people, in their interaction with each other and with nature. At this concrete level, but at a broader scale, the concept of *social formation* is in its turn used to refer to concrete geopolitical entities at a given stage of their historical development. Contemporary Guinea-Bissau is, therefore, a social formation comprising many different social-productive arrangements, each of which crystallises the logics of one of a relatively small number of modes of production.

I shall argue further on in this thesis that chief amongst these modes of production present in contemporary Guinea-Bissau through concrete social-productive arrangements are *simple household production*, *tributary production* and *capitalism*. The key features distinguishing the former two from capitalism is that, in the latter, ownership of the means of production does not lie with the immediate producer but with someone else, who buys the worker’s labour-power as a commodity. By contrast, in simple household (commodity or non-commodity) production, the means of production (including, crucially, the land) *are* the property of the immediate producers. While this may still involve the mobilisation (and possibly exploitation) of the labour of others through ties of kinship and solidarity (including patriarchal power relations), it does *not* involve the purchase of their labour-power. In its turn, tributary production – analogous to what is sometimes also called the ancient mode

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<sup>2</sup> This is not to say that they are the *only* determinants, nor that there is a simple and unilinear correspondence between individual positions within a given class structure and individual conscience and behaviour.

<sup>3</sup> This section draws extensively on Marx (1977[1859] and 1982[1867]). Detailed referencing is provided in the context of the theoretical discussion in Chapter 3.

of production – consists of the appropriation of surplus-labour by means of mechanisms articulated on the political and legal apparatuses of the state (in this case the kingship, and often taking on religious significance). While this appropriation may take the form of either labour itself or of its products, once again it does *not* involve the purchase of either the workers' labour or labour-power as a commodity.

We have seen that capitalism is unique in that it is characterised by the separation between the workers and the means of production (through social relations of property) alongside the buying and selling of the workers' labour-power as a *commodity* – i.e. a use-value (something useful and capable of fulfilling human needs) that, by virtue of its participation in exchange, acquires an exchange-value (a relation of equivalence with other commodities). Both labour and labour-power may be purchased as commodities: in the sense adopted throughout this thesis, the former consists of *work* (the useful interaction of humans with nature) when its products are appropriated, through exchange or otherwise, by others; whereas *labour-power* consists of the *capacity* to work, which may be sold to the owner of the means of production with a view to being combined with the latter in production – as indeed is the typical arrangement under capitalism. The class that, under capitalism, owns the means of production and purchases the workers' labour-power is the *bourgeoisie*; the class that stands in dialectical opposition to it, insofar as it has been historically dispossessed of the means of production and must resort to the selling of its labour-power in order to survive, is the *proletariat*. Thus, the process of *proletarianisation* – also called primitive accumulation – consists in the constitution of a proletariat through its dispossession of the means of production.

The process of historical development in the context of social formations undergoing a transition to the capitalist mode of production is therefore characterised by a process of substitution of a specific class structure – a bourgeoisie standing in opposition to a proletariat – for any previously-existing structure. Whenever the previously-existing structure was largely composed of a relatively homogeneous class of independent producers characterised by universal ownership of the means of production, none of them resorting to buying or selling the labour-power of others, we speak of a process of *class differentiation*.

By virtue of the unequal terms under which the two parties come to the exchange of labour-power (one of them being forced to sell its labour-power in order to survive), the capitalist social relation makes it possible for the purchase to involve *exploitation*, i.e. the



expropriation of surplus-labour (labour undertaken by the workers in excess of that which is required for their own physical and social reproduction). This surplus-labour is, in its turn, incorporated into the commodities produced by the workers as *value*, and it is eventually realised by the capitalist through the subsequent exchange of those commodities. Because of the generalised character of commodity production under capitalism, each capitalist faces the competition of other capitalists and is thereby driven to increase the rate of exploitation so as to be able to compete. Each capitalist is also driven to re-invest the surplus-value extracted from the workers into the buying of more labour-power and the intensification of subsequent production. Surplus-value becomes *capital* when it is used in this way, in the context of this specific social relation. The twin forces of exploitation and competition that inherently characterise capitalism therefore contain an intrinsic tendency towards the expanded accumulation of capital and the intensification of production through technical and social means (which I shall refer to as *modernisation*) – hence the inherently and uniquely dynamic character of capitalism.

In agrarian contexts, any largely pre-capitalist social universe made up of relatively independent producers (who own sufficient means of production to ensure their own physical and social reproduction without being forced to sell their labour-power to others, given that a process of class differentiation has not comprehensively occurred) is what is sometimes referred to as the *peasantry*. The process of differentiation of the peasantry into classes in the context of the capital relation therefore involves the generalisation of commodity production, with labour-power playing a decisive role as a pivotal commodity. However, *commodification*, or the process of expansion of the sphere of use-values that enter into a relation of equivalence with each other by virtue of their participation in exchange, has historically predated capitalism. It is only when labour-power itself is invested in the role of a commodity that we may properly speak of a capitalist social-productive arrangement.

Thus, as we shall see, it is perfectly possible, especially in contexts where simple commodity production predominates, for a major share of society's total labour to go into the production of commodities even while the capitalist social relation is itself absent from, or only incipient in, the process of production. Again in agrarian contexts, a typical way in which this occurs consists of the introduction of market mediation between production and consumption through the substitution of *cash crops* (agricultural production destined for market exchange) for *food crops* (destined for consumption by the immediate producers). This constitutes an instance of commodification – one which continues to make massive

inroads throughout the developing world, in most cases predating (and paving the way for) properly capitalist social relations of production. In this thesis, we shall be looking at the development effects of migration in Guinea-Bissau in general, but we shall be focusing particularly on its agrarian context, not least because this social formation as a whole remains largely agrarian to this day. We shall therefore be especially interested in assessing how some key processes of agrarian change are playing out in rural Guinea-Bissau, the main emphasis being on commodification, class differentiation and modernisation (in the specific sense mentioned above).

All of the above provides the minimum conceptual basis required to undertake a discussion of, and investigation into, the political economy of development. Because we are interested in the political economy of migration and development, however, we still need to introduce the basic concepts to be mobilised that pertain to the domain of mobility, migration and their respective consequences. Thus, throughout this thesis, *migration* shall refer to a permanent<sup>4</sup> change in geographical location involving a change in social context. It is a narrower concept than *mobility*, which consists of any change (or the capacity for change) in location – permanent or otherwise, and not necessarily involving a change in social context. As is obvious, not all migration is motivated by the wish to undertake an occupation, nor does it subsequently give rise to such an undertaking – when it is and it does, however, we speak of *labour* migration – which shall constitute our main focus, albeit not the sole one. Then, while away from their contexts of origin, migrants may send flows of resources (information, money, goods, etc.) back to those contexts: the specific case of the flow of money and goods is referred to as *remittances* (money or in-kind). Following the completion of a migration cycle, the permanent move by the migrants to their original context of origin (be it the village, city, region or the country/social formation as a whole) is referred to as *return migration*.

Before we begin our investigation into the political economy of migration and development in contemporary Guinea-Bissau, only two more things are in order. The first, which takes up the next section in this introductory chapter, is a presentation of the way in which this thesis is structured. The other consists of explaining what is meant by “contemporary” in the context of this research project. In reality, it takes two slightly different meanings: throughout most of the passages drawing on secondary sources, it usually refers to Guinea-Bissau’s post-independence period, with a major focus on the last

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<sup>4</sup> Needless to say, the distinction between ‘temporary’ and ‘permanent’ is always to a certain extent arbitrary and requires operationalisation (see Chapter 5).

few years and occasional inroads into the colonial and pre-colonial past; in other passages, however, especially in the village-level case-studies drawing on primary data collection, it mostly takes on a 'snapshot' meaning, and refers to the period when the data were collected (late 2010-early 2011) as well as, usually, the preceding months.

### ***1.3 Outline of the thesis***

This thesis is divided into two parts. Part I ("Theoretical debates") presents and discusses the theoretical foundations of this thesis, and comprises Chapters 2, 3 and 4. Chapter 2 ("Migration and its determinants") addresses the issue of the causes of migration and briefly lays out the main theoretical perspectives on this issue, including the neoclassical theoretical account of migration, mobility transition theory, the New Economics of Labour Migration and the historical-structural perspective. It concludes with a call for a renewed historical-structural synthesis consistent with the historical materialist theoretical perspective on development. After that, Chapter 3 ("Development and change") briefly summarises the main currents in economic development theory, including neoclassical growth theory, structuralist theories of development, dependency theory and the historical materialist account of development, before providing the reasons for adhering to the latter. The last theoretical chapter (Chapter 4: "Migration-development linkages") reviews the literature on the development consequences of migration, including some of those made in accordance with the historical materialist perspective.

Part II then contains the case-study of the social formation of interest to us: contemporary Guinea-Bissau. Chapter 5 ("Research methods and organisation of work") provides an account of the methods used in the empirical investigation (which included semi-structured interviews, focus groups and a household survey on migration and development), the choice of village-level case-studies and some other logistical and methodological issues of relevance. It also includes a presentation of the research questions and aims, as well as a discussion of possible sources of error and bias in the empirical work. Then comes Chapter 6 ("Migration and development in Guinea-Bissau: a macro-level overview"), which provides a broad account of the processes of migration and development in the context of this social formation, largely drawing on secondary – both descriptive and analytical – sources. This chapter contains an overview of the country's historical background, a discussion of its contemporary political-economic features, an account of its history of migration and a discussion of the development consequences of

migration at the macro level. This is followed by the two village-level case-study chapters (Chapter 7, “Caiomete”, and Chapter 8, “Braima Sori”), which contain a wealth of descriptive and analytical content based on the village-level fieldwork. Chapter 9 (“Conclusions from the case-study”) then integrates elements from Chapters 6, 7 and 8 at the level of the both the case-study villages and the social formation as a whole in order to come to general tentative conclusions on the political economy of migration and development in Guinea-Bissau. Finally, Chapter 10 (“Theoretical implications and final remarks”) briefly revisits the theoretical debates reviewed in Part I under the light of the conclusions from the case-study, before laying out some concluding considerations on the future prospects for the development of Guinea-Bissau.

## **PART I – THEORETICAL DEBATES**

## 2. Migration and its determinants

Almost three decades ago, C. Wood (1982:1) stated in the introduction to his critical review of theoretical perspectives on migration that “the volume of published material in the field of migration is so large that a list limited to bibliographies and literature reviews would run to many pages”. Since that time, many more theoretical contributions to this topic (and reviews thereof) have been published, and for that reason the overview contained in this chapter does not aim at being either fully comprehensive or particularly original; rather, it seeks to map this theoretical field by providing an introductory presentation of the main perspectives, and then drawing on that to account for the specific theoretical foundations of this research project<sup>5</sup>.

### 2.1 *Early contributions*

The origins of migration theory as an autonomous field of enquiry are usually traced back to Ernest Ravenstein (1885, 1889), who drew on data, first from the British Isles and then from other European countries, in order to identify empirical regularities that might be posited as plausible “laws of migration”. He arrived at seven such laws (1885:198-199):

1. Most migrants “only proceed a short distance”;
2. Migrant absorption “grows less with the distance proportionately to the native population which furnishes them”, and population gaps resulting from migration from surrounding areas “are filled up by migrants from more remote districts (...), step by step(...)”;
3. “The process of dispersion is the inverse of that of absorption, and exhibits similar features”;
4. “Each main current of migration produces a compensating counter-current”;

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<sup>5</sup> For literature surveys on this topic complementary to this one, the reader is thus referred, in addition to the aforementioned survey by Wood (1982), to Massey *et al* (1993 and 1998) and de Haas (2007).

5. "Migrants proceeding long distances generally go by preference to one of the great centres of commerce or industry";
6. "The natives of towns are less migratory than those of the rural parts of the country"; and
7. "Females are more migratory than males".

Ravenstein's attempt at nomothetic generalisation was to have little continuation in the subsequent decades<sup>6</sup>, but the mid-20<sup>th</sup> Century would see some significant developments within the field of migration theory: some of the most notable included George Zipf's (1946) theoretical work on the intercity movement of persons and the work of Torsten Hägerstrand's (1957), who contributed and developed such concepts as "step-wise migration", "migration field" and "migration chain".

Thus, in his most famous paper, Zipf (1946) essentially picked up and formalised Ravenstein's 'law' no. 2, in what was to become known as 'Zipf's law':  $M = (P_1 \times P_2) / D$ , or, the intensity of population movement between any two places is proportional to the product of their respective populations  $P_1$  and  $P_2$  divided by the distance that separates them. In its turn, Hägerstrand's influential work included a clarification of the mechanisms through which step-wise migration occurs, as well as insights on how migration fields operate which were particularly interesting in that this author "directed [his] attention to deviations from [the] distance-decay 'regularity'" identified and posited by Zipf (Agnew and Cox 1980:69). In what would prove a clear forerunner of network theory (see below), Hägerstrand hypothesised that the explanation for these deviations lay in "the significance of interpersonal communication flows between an earlier set of migrants originating at the same location and a later set who followed them to the same destination" (id ibid:71), thus introducing the concept of "migration chain" and an understanding of migration as innovation.

## ***2.2 The emergence of the neoclassical theory of migration***

The standard formulation of the neoclassical theory of migration is usually considered to be that put forth by Michael Todaro and John Harris (see below). However, this represented

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<sup>6</sup> Cf. Lee's (1966:48) comment to the effect that "This century has brought no comparable [to Ravenstein's] excursion into migration theory".

the culminating step in a process of theoretical development that had its roots in the work of other authors. Especially prominent among the latter were Everett Lee's (1966) 'push-pull' theory of migrant agency, and Arthur Lewis' (1954) and Renis and Fei's (1961) seminal accounts of migration within the specific context of developing countries.

Everett Lee sought to develop "a general schema into which a variety of spatial movements can be placed" (Lee 1966:49) by putting forth a general hypothesis with respect to migrant agency that became known as 'push-pull theory'. In his own formulation (id ibid:49-50), "the factors that enter into the decision to migrate and the process of migration may be summarised under four headings, as follows: i) factors associated with the area of origin; ii) factors associated with the area of destination; iii) intervening obstacles; and iv) personal factors". He thus conceptualised the decision to migrate as the result of a cost-benefit comparison between the attractive and repulsive features of both areas, though this comparison and the enactment of its results are constrained by "natural inertia", distance, information, personal factors, etc. (id ibid:51). This renders clear why it is that the rational-choice foundations of neoclassical economics' later formulations of migrant agency are often traced back to Lee, even though this author himself stressed that "the decision to migrate is never completely rational, and for some persons the rational component is much less than the irrational" (id ibid:51).

Another key foundation of neoclassical migration theory consisted of the work of Arthur Lewis, although the role played by this author in this process may be considered somewhat puzzling – especially because the most commonly cited of his articles in this context (Lewis 1954) did not seek to put forth a theory of the determinants of migration as such, instead addressing the phenomenon of migration in the context of the broader process of economic development. Indeed, the focus of Lewis' seminal article was on the economic duality characteristic of underdeveloped countries, whereby a traditional sector characterised by the existence of redundant labour and low capital-labour ratios co-exists with a modern sector characterised by higher levels of capital intensity. In this model, the different capital-labour ratios in the two sectors entail different marginal productivities of labour, implying different wage levels, which in turn encourage the workers in the traditional sector (especially redundant ones) to migrate to the modern sector (which is most often spatially concentrated in cities). This enabled Lewis to suggest that: i) the process of economic development inherently involves the absorption by the modern sector of the "surplus labour" from the traditional sector; and ii) the competition undertaken by the migrant workers enables the modern sector to lower its wages to the level practised in



the traditional sector, thus explaining the high profits and capital rents that characterise the modern sector in these countries. The key element to be subsequently retained by the neoclassical theoretical account of migration, however, was the fact that spatial movements were principally determined by differential factor returns – a mere simplifying hypotheses in Lewis' model.

Gustav Ranis and John Fei (1961) then drew heavily on the work of Lewis and explicitly reaffirmed that "development consists of the re-allocation of surplus agricultural labor, whose contribution to output may have been zero or negligible, to industry where they become productive members of the labor force at a wage equal (or tied) to the institutional wage in agriculture" (Ranis and Fei 1961:533). The main aim of their paper was to incorporate "a satisfactory analysis of the subsistence or agricultural sector" into Lewis' model. In summary terms, they did this by positing the existence, during the initial "stages" of development, of an institutional wage, set by non-competitive forces, in the traditional sector. As the absorption of labour by the modern sector proceeds, a point is reached when the marginal productivity of labour in the agricultural sector is equal to or greater than the institutional wage. According to these authors, that point marks not only the "full commercialisation of the agricultural sector", but also "a non-arbitrary criterion for an economy reaching the threshold of so-called self-sustaining growth" (id *ibid*:537).

Lewis' and Ranis and Fei's models were thus models of development more generally, in which migration only played a supporting role, but they were to constitute important foundations of Todaro and Harris's model of rural-urban migration, which came to be considered, and abundantly cited ever since, as the neoclassical model of migration *par excellence* (Todaro 1969 and 1976, Harris and Todaro 1970). These authors thus put forth a full-fledged "behavioural model of rural-urban labor migration", in which "the percentage change in the urban labor force during any period is governed by the differential between the discounted streams of expected urban and rural real income" (Todaro 1969:141). Because migration is deemed to potentially take place from rural to urban areas, the migration decision-making process in this model is depicted as a comparison between the discounted future streams of real rural income, which are known by the potential migrants, and the discounted future streams of the income that those migrants expect to earn by migrating to the cities (defined as the urban real income weighed by the probability of employment). Todaro and Harris' model presents itself as a "behavioural model of migration" that seeks to account for 'macro' outcomes by aggregation of individual (optimising) decisions. In that sense, it is a typical

methodologically-individualist neoclassical model. The ‘macro’ consequences, then, are that migration serves as an optimal resource-allocation mechanism, whereby labour is transferred from labour-abundant to labour-scarce regions, and factor returns are equalised.

Interestingly, the Todaro-Harris model came after a considerably less-cited, but arguably more realistic, neoclassical behavioural model – Sjaastad’s (1962) “investment” model. This model proposes to “treat migration as an investment increasing the productivity of human resources” (id *ibid*:83), whereby workers incur in the “money and non-money” costs associated with the migration process, under the expectation of increasing the lifetime (money and non-money) returns to their provision of labour and choice of location. However, due to the difficulty of measuring or estimating the non-monetary costs and returns, as well as to the existence of “barriers to the free movement of labor” (id *ibid*:91), Sjaastad is careful not to derive “macro” implications by simple aggregation. His model is thus closer to Lee’s – more realistic than Harris and Todaro’s, but also less powerful (and ultimately less popular), arguably due to the incongruent attempt to add realism to an approach that, for its methodologically-individualist and rational-choice foundations, is intrinsically unrealistic.

When we examine the gradual emergence of the ‘standard’ neoclassical theory of migration, it is perhaps puzzling how the Todaro-Harris model came to be considered its quintessential representative, for it may be regarded as considerably more oversimplifying and less realistic than other methodologically-individualist models of migration put forth at roughly the same time (namely Sjaastad’s and Lee’s). Its rise to the status of ‘representative’ model to the detriment of other models is interesting in that it suggests the often superior power and popularity of (overly) simple and (over-)simplifying ideas.

### ***2.3 Historical-structural approaches***

The main alternative to the neoclassical theoretical account of migration, at least until the emergence of the NELM (see below), has been the historical-structural approach. It is not a unified theory, however, nor is there a ‘representative’ model analogous to Todaro’s. Indeed, as argued by Wood (1982:301), the historical-structural approach is “considerably more difficult to summarize”, due in part to the fact that it is to be found “in a variety of models”. Still, a number of features common to these various theoretical accounts can be

identified that make it possible to characterise this approach as a whole: i) their entirely structural emphasis and lack of (even concern for) a theory of individual migrant agency; ii) the fact that migration, both internal and international, is regarded as part and parcel of broader processes of structural change (i.e. development), rather than as a “discrete element of social reality that can be subjected to separate investigation” (id ibid:301-302); iii) their typical recourse to inductive and historical methods, to the detriment of neoclassical theory’s hypothetical-deductivism; and iv) the rejection of ‘equilibrium’ as a structuring principle.

The main theoretical contributions that make up the historical-structural approach emphasise different aspects of the migration phenomenon, and it is only by bringing them together that the theory becomes a comprehensive and integrated whole. A major internal distinction is between those authors that emphasise the processes characteristic of ‘migrant-attracting’ areas and those who focus on what takes place in ‘migrant-producing’ areas. The main argument of the former is that capitalist accumulation in the advanced industrialised economies intrinsically requires a constant inflow of workers, which creates a structural incentive for immigration to occur. The emphasis of the latter is on the fact that, rather than being a consequence of a lack of development, emigration from poorer areas is historically associated with development itself and the penetration of commodity and capitalist relations that characterises it. This distinction is far from clear-cut, though, for other authors working within the same broad perspective have emphasised other structural features of migration – such as the rhythmic and hierarchical patterns that characterise the functioning of the global system of labour supply, or the pivotal role played by “global cities” in the circulation of capital and labour. The following paragraphs review some of the key contributions in this respect.

One of the key theoretical contributions focusing on the ‘receiving end’ of migration streams consists of dual (or segmented) labour market theory, whose initiator and chief advocate has been Michael Piore. This author’s account of migration draws explicitly on Marxist perspectives on “the structure of employment opportunities [as] governed by social and historical processes that dominate and overcome the kinds of forces upon which conventional theory focuses” (Piore 1979:9). However, it also departs from those perspectives insofar as it posits that “countervailing factors” operate that prevent the processes of de-skilling and labour homogenisation (characteristic of Marxist accounts of the socialisation of production under capitalism) from affecting the entire working class in a homogeneous way. Rather, the basic idea is that the labour markets of advanced

industrialised economies are characterised by an inherent dualism, whereby a “primary” sector characterised by skilled, stable and well-paid jobs co-exists with a “secondary” sector comprising unstable, unskilled and poorly remunerated jobs (Piore 1979; Berger and Piore 1980). This economic dualism is regarded as inherently flowing from the duality of labour and capital as factors of production, whereby capital is regarded as essentially ‘fixed’ and labour as ‘variable’ (for capitalists typically respond to downward shifts in demand by laying off workers rather than capital). Within this general structure, it is argued that there is a structural demand for migrants to fill in jobs in the secondary sector by virtue of their differential legal and moral rights as well as bargaining power. By contrast, those workers that perform more ‘strategic’ tasks in more stable and capital-intensive production processes will typically be able to secure employment conditions characterised by higher wages and better working conditions, which typically also command higher social status.

Despite Piore’s caveats distancing him from orthodox Marxist theory, there are significant parallels and complementarities to be found between his explanation of the structural demand for migrant workers in advanced industrialised economies and Castles and Kosack’s (1973) or Nikolinakos’ (1975) more explicitly and representatively Marxist accounts of the functions of labour immigration in those economies. In the case of the latter, the emphasis is less on the specific mechanisms that give rise to this demand and more on the class interests that it serves (i.e. they are certainly more ‘functionalist’). However, the conclusions are essentially analogous. Thus, Castles and Kosack draw on two central categories of Marxist analysis – Marx’s “industrial reserve army”, and Kautsky and Lenin’s “labour aristocracy” – to explain why labour in-migration in general, and foreign immigration in particular, is essential to the interests of the (metropolitan) bourgeoisie. As industrial reserve army, immigrants ensure that labour costs are kept sufficiently low so as to sustain profit rates. At the same time, they also enable capital(ists) to divide the working class and reduce the likelihood and immediacy of the latter’s counter-systemic uprising. This undermining of workers’ unity is achieved through both material and ideological mechanisms: “by creating a split between immigrant and indigenous workers along national and racial lines and offering better conditions and status to indigenous workers, it is possible to give large sections of the working class the consciousness of a labour aristocracy” (Castles and Kosack 1973:6). Nikolinakos’ account is essentially similar, even though the concept of “labour aristocracy” is not explicitly mobilised. While not purporting to explain the emergence of the ideologies of racism and nationalism (which historically

predate capitalism), these accounts therefore provide a political-economic *raison d'être* for their promotion and resilience in the context of 'core' capitalist social formations.

The complementary character of the two types of historical-structural explanations presented above rests on the fact that dual labour market theory seeks to identify the historically-specific mechanisms through which structural demand for immigrant labour arises in advanced industrialised societies, whereas more orthodox Marxist accounts emphasise the specific class interests that it serves, as well as the function of immigration in the development and stability of advanced capitalism. At the same time, however, they are essentially analogous in that both present international mass migration as intrinsically determined by the demands of the industrialised 'core'.

Other authors working within the historical-structural perspective, such as Douglas Massey (1988), have complemented these latter approaches by emphasising the processes through which a steady supply of migrants is created in the areas of *origin*, making it possible to meet the demand for them in more advanced countries and regions. It is not that Massey negates the importance of the structural processes taking place in the core – quite the contrary. However, instead of assuming an unlimited and readily available pool of potential immigrants that does not require accounting for, his focus is on explaining how it is, and where it is, that “a mobile population that is prone to migrate” tends to arise (Massey *et al* 1993:444). In doing so, this author turns the neoclassical hypothesis that emigration stems from a lack of economic development on its head by suggesting that the aforementioned “migration-prone” populations typically emerge precisely as a consequence of development. This is because the processes of commodification and capitalist development, by entailing “three mutually reinforcing processes: the substitution of capital for labor, the privatization and consolidation of land-holding, and the creation of markets” (Massey 1988:391), inevitably uproot large numbers of people from their traditional ways of life. It is these people, this author argues, that “constitute the source for the massive population movements that inevitably accompany development” (id *ibid*:384). Most of these people will, at least initially, move to relatively proximate urban areas where capital has a tendency to concentrate, which is why economic development and urbanisation are inextricably linked. However, just like intercontinental migration served as an ‘escape valve’ for excess rural-urban migrants in the context of European development up until the 20th Century – especially at times of recession –, so does international migration fulfil that function in the context of the capitalist development of the peripheral ‘South’. Central to this author’s perspective on the causes of migration is, therefore, an

understanding of development as process, rather than condition (as implicitly in the neoclassical account). The corollary is that emigration will occur, first and foremost, from those areas that undergo the most sudden, extensive and profound penetration by commodity and capitalist relations.

Piore (1979), Castles and Kosack (1973) and Massey (1988) are certainly not the only landmark theoretical pieces within the historical-structural literature on migration. However, they are particularly representative of the various different emphases within that literature, and especially illustrative of the complementarity between them. Still, other authors working within the historical-structural perspective, including Saskia Sassen (1988 and 1991) and Elizabeth Petras (1981), have sought to encompass some of the arguments outlined above within a broader framework, or to emphasise additional features of the processes under analysis. Saskia Sassen's "The Mobility of Labour and Capital" (1988) constitutes a remarkable attempt to bring together the demand- and supply-centred components of the historical-structural perspective by portraying international migration as the globalisation of the labour supply system within the context of the globalisation of production more generally. On the supply side of international migration, the role of foreign direct investment is emphasised as a "mediating structure that operates indirectly in a highly complex manner both ideologically and structurally (...) to create various kinds of linkages with the capital-sending countries" (id *ibid*:119). Export-oriented industrialisation, in particular, is theoretically posited (with empirical support) to typically give rise to long-distance mass migration flows. On the demand side, Sassen's most innovative theoretical contribution consists of reframing the 'dual labour market' and 'class polarisation' arguments under a new lens: that of the historical "rise of global cities" (id *ibid*: 126-170). The idea, further developed in Sassen (1991), is that the international mobility of both capital and labour is best analysed in a hierarchical network perspective, whereby certain nodes (global cities) not only concentrate and control an immensely disproportionate share of capital, but also constitute the prime destinations of international migration flows. This is due not only to the fact that labour tends to go where capital flows from (i.e. to a large extent, global cities), but also to the specific structure of labour demand in these cities (namely, the need for cheap labour in the non-tradable and non-delocalisable 'wage-goods' service sector). Thus, this approach may be regarded as a reframing of previous historical-structural theoretical arguments (implicitly characterised by methodological nationalism) by placing them in a transnational 'network' framework.

In its turn, Petras' approach explicitly endorses the theoretical framework of world-systems analysis (*cf.* Wallerstein 2004) and adopts a very-long-run perspective. Part of its interest lies in its comprehensive treatment of historical migration flows: four major types are deemed historically most significant – “movement from lower wage to higher wage zones”, “colonial settler migration”, “labor flows among markets with relatively similar wage thresholds” and the movement of “the small number of highly paid and trained technicians who accompany capital investments to locations of production in low-wage zones” –, but the first of these, it is argued, “has generally predominated” (Petras 1981:48). Labour migration from the periphery to the core is conceived as coming about because it is in the interests of both peripheral workers (who thereby access “sites where prior contests over the labor-capital balance have already been won by labor”: *id* *ibid*: 49) and core capital (which “needs to have this labor surplus to use, at its disposal, only to discard it when it is not required for production”: *id* *ibid*:50). Where Petras' account is most original is in its application to international migration of world-systems analysis' theory of history as being characterised by “secular trends” and “cyclical rhythms” around those trends: this author argues that while labour migration from the periphery to the core is a secular feature of the modern world-system, its peaks and troughs, as well as its specific geographical patterns, are largely though imperfectly governed by the long-wave (Kondratieff) and shorter-wave (Kuznets, among others) “fluctuations of crisis and growth which affect expansion and contraction of specific labor markets” (*id* *ibid*: 54).

## **2.4 The New Economics of Labour Migration**

The New Economics of Labour Migration (henceforth NELM) emerged in the 1980s as an alternative theoretical framework for addressing the determinants of migration, which purportedly sought to redress both the perceivably over-simplistic character of the neoclassical theory of migration and the alleged lack of regard for human agency in historical-structural accounts. By doing so, it has been portrayed as a “structurationist” ‘third way’ between the two latter theoretical perspectives (de Haas 2007), or at least presented on an equal footing to them as a distinct theory of migration (Massey *et al* 1993) – portrayals which I shall argue to largely miss the point (see below). In any case, the key theoretical propositions of the NELM can, according to two of its major proponents (Stark and Bloom 1985:173-6), be summarised under five main headings: i) the emphasis on relative deprivation as a determinant of migration; ii) the emphasis on the household as the

relevant decision-making unit; iii) the emphasis on migration as a strategy to diversify risk and overcome market incompleteness; iv) the introduction of information-theoretical considerations in migration theory; and v) the interpretation of migration as a process of innovation adoption and diffusion.

The emphasis on relative deprivation as a determinant of migration was introduced by Oded Stark (1984; see also Stark and Taylor 1989 and 1991). It rests on the hypothesis that potential migrants carry out interpersonal income comparisons with other people within their relevant social settings, and that it is these comparisons, along with the wish to improve their relative positions within those settings, that constitute the relevant element in the decision-making process. This hypothesis constitutes an application to the field of migration of the theory of relative deprivation introduced by Stouffer *et al* (1949, cit. in Stark and Taylor 1989), and it seeks to account for the fact that, in many concrete contexts, “migration rates are higher from villages where the distribution of income by size is more unequal” (Stark: 1984:475).

The second central feature of the NELM is the idea that the relevant decision-making unit in the migration process consists of the household rather than the individual, and that the decision by the household to have one of its members migrate to a different location can often be understood primarily as a way to hedge against risk and overcome market incompleteness (Katz and Stark 1986 and 1987; Lauby and Stark 1988). In contrast to the optimising individual migrant assumed in the neoclassical microeconomic theory of migration, this theory of migrant agency holds that it is the household that optimises, that there is an element of uncertainty and risk to future incomes (hence the household’s degree of risk aversion enters into the optimisation exercise), and that migration by one or more members of the household constitutes precisely a form of self-insurance against future income risk (particularly if the migrants’ future income is expected to be uncorrelated, or negatively correlated, with that of the rest of the household: Stark and Bloom 1985). In this way, migration serves, in particular, to hedge against the risks of crop failure, falling prices and unemployment (*cf.* Massey *et al* 1993). Because these risks might alternatively be insured against through recourse to, respectively, crop insurance, futures markets and unemployment benefits, it follows that a greater propensity to migrate is to be expected from those areas where there is greater market incompleteness and lesser availability of formal and informal collective self-insurance schemes.



The incorporation of aspects such as incompleteness of information, risk, self-insurance or game-theoretical analyses of intra-household commitments (Stark and Bloom 1985:175) renders clear the information-theoretical character of the NELM. It also provides a theoretical framework in which to reframe the analysis of migration as a process of innovation adoption and diffusion (itself not an innovation, insofar as it can be traced back to Hägerstrand's early contribution; see above). In the NELM framework, the speed of diffusion of the decision to migrate as an innovation is depicted as a function of the interaction between the risk-aversion properties of the potentially adopting households' utility functions and the extent to which information conveyed by previous migrants reduces the uncertainty surrounding the migration option itself, conditioned by market incompleteness and the overall income distribution at the origin (Stark and Bloom 1985).

For all the apparent novelty surrounding the NELM, however, I have argued elsewhere (Abreu forthcoming) that this theoretical approach is in fact little more than a slightly more sophisticated avatar of the neoclassical theory of migration, insofar as it retains the latter's fundamental 'core' of hypothetical-deductivism, methodological individualism and optimising rationality. The NELM "acknowledged the importance of household-level decision-making dynamics (though it did not go to any lengths to open the 'black box' of those dynamics); abandoned the perfect-information assumption that was so clearly at odds with the reality of information flows shaping and reshaping migration systems through migrant networks and other sub-systems; and allowed for a more satisfying explanation of macro outcomes (namely, the predominance of immobility)" (id ibid:11). However, by retaining the fundamental ontological and methodological foundations of the neoclassical approach and merely providing the latter with a more sophisticated information-theoretic clothing, it is in fact "old wine in new bottles", as argued by Fine (2006) with respect to such other instances of economics imperialism in recent decades as the new development economics or most literature on social capital (Abreu forthcoming:11).

## ***2.5 The mobility transition approach***

A less well-known but original theoretical approach to migration, which emerged in the 1970s and was initiated by Wilbur Zelinsky (1971), is that which explores the idea of a "mobility transition" analogous to the demographic (Thompson 1928) and epidemiological (Omran 1971) transitions. Like the two latter transitions, the mobility transition hypothesis

is a set of mostly descriptive propositions to do with the distinctive stages that societies go through as they modernise – in this case, with respect to mobility patterns. “Nations” are thus posited to follow unilinear paths from a traditional stage to a modern or post-modern (“future superadvanced”; Zelinsky 1971:231) stage, exhibiting “definite, patterned regularities in the growth of personal mobility [,which] comprise an essential component of the modernization process” (id ibid:221-2). In this interpretation, the modernisation process is construed as radiating “lava-like” from a “socioeconomic hearth” (id ibid:228), and as being composed of a set of mutually interdependent transitions: demographic, mobility, occupational, educational, etc.. The mobility transition is not limited to migration, in the usual sense of a permanent change of residence: the identified patterns and regularities refer to the various components of total territorial mobility, including both residential mobility and circulation. Five distinctive phases are thus identified as making up “an irreversible progression of stages” (id ibid:230-1):

- Phase I (Pre-modern Traditional): little residential migration; limited circulation sanctioned by customary practice;
- Phase II (Early Transitional): massive movement from countryside to cities; significant movement to colonisation frontiers; major outflow of emigrants; significant growth in circulation; small but significant immigration of skilled professionals;
- Phase III (Late Transitional): slackening but still major movement from countryside to city; lessening flow to colonisation frontiers; emigration on the decline or ceased; further increase in volume and complexity of circulation;
- Phase IV (Advanced): residential mobility has levelled off; movement from countryside to city further reduced; vigorous intra- and inter-urban movement; stagnant or retreating settlement frontier; significant net immigration of unskilled and semi-skilled workers from relatively underdeveloped lands; significant international mobility of skilled professionals; vigorous circulation, particularly economic and pleasure-oriented;
- Phase V (Future Superadvanced): decline in residential mobility and some forms of circulation due to better communication and delivery systems; acceleration of other forms of circulation and possibly inception of new ones; nearly all residential

mobility is intra- and inter-urban; possibly, strict political control of internal and international movements.

Zelinsky's approach is commendable in its depiction of all aspects of mobility as interrelated, as well as in its ability to integrate many actually-existing processes that have characterised the historical trajectory of many different societies. However, it is also criticisable (and has been criticised) on several grounds. First, on the fact that this model "perpetuated the myth of the immobile pre-modern society", which has been dismissed as historically inaccurate (Skeldon 1997:32). Second, due to being too 'loose' and descriptive: like the demographic transition model, it is more a set of descriptive propositions than an actual theory, insofar as the mechanisms through which the progression from stage to stage comes about are only sketched or assumed, rather than specified. Third, probably the single greatest weakness of this model is its implicit assumption that the past trajectories of more advanced social formations can be replicated by the 'laggards' as if each transition proceeded autonomously and unconstrained. In this sense, Zelinsky's mobility transition model might perhaps be described as 'historical-structuralism minus polarisation': the approach is clearly historical and structural (as opposed to hypothetical-deductive and methodologically individualistic), but it assumes the possibility of the independent "modernisation" of all nations, disregards the supra-national constraints at work in the world economy, and implausibly extends to the realm of international migration that which is more plausible in the sphere of internal migration and circulation.

Probably the most sophisticated attempt to build on the mobility transition hypothesis is that put forth by Ronald Skeldon (1990 and 1997), who explicitly sought to ascertain whether "'patterned regularities' in human mobility through space and time (...) have existed in the recent experience of developing countries and whether the sequence of mobility change is as Zelinsky suggested" (Skeldon 1990:45). With this in mind, this author examined the historical evidence from a variety of countries and eventually concluded that Zelinsky's hypotheses are generally corroborated, but fail to take into account the contextual modification brought about by the (hierarchical) dynamics and constraints introduced by the "gradual absorption of areas into a world-wide capitalist system" (id ibid:218). While Skeldon starts out in the footsteps of Zelinsky and acknowledges the general validity of the latter's hypothesis, it is also apparent that his own approach is in fact closest to the methodological and theoretical tenets of the historical-structural perspective: on the one hand, the methodology is clearly historical (indeed, almost encyclopaedic) in that the author draws on a wealth of population and mobility data from a variety of

contexts across time and space in order to identify both specificities and more general regularities; on the other, it is explicitly structural, insofar as the suggested way to overcome the perceived lack of “explanatory power” (id *ibid*:28) of Zelinsky’s formulation of the transition hypothesis is one that takes into account the concerns, “often but not necessarily Marxist”, with structural “questions of resource allocation, the international distribution of power and government policy, and the whole nebulous field of ‘development’” (id *ibid*:132). By pointing out the relationship between the global diffusion of the capitalist mode of production and the hierarchical shaping and reshaping of migration fields, Skeldon gives a considerable boost to the explanatory power of the mobility transition hypothesis by effectively reconciling it with the historical-structural account of migration. He thus highlights that the mobility transition hypothesis only seems to be valid if one takes into account that the societies undergoing it do so at different moments in “world time”, that the key element setting the pace of that “world time” is the global diffusion of capitalism, and that this process introduces a crucial element of differentiation in terms of how different geographical areas participate in different migration fields.

Skeldon’s later book “Migration and Development: a Global Perspective” (Skeldon 1997) expands the ideas put forth in his previous work by giving relatively greater emphasis to international migration, bringing the more developed parts of the world into the analysis, and introducing a typology of areas in the world economy according to the characteristics of their participation in the global migration system. In so doing, this author moves even further away from the methodological nationalism of Zelinsky’s original theory and closer to a world-systemic perspective, even though he once again refrains from explicitly endorsing a historical-structural approach and, in particular, criticises the world-systems and dependency schools for their alleged functionalist and Eurocentric bias. As a result of this exercise, Skeldon proposes a hierarchical global structure made up of five fluid (i.e. “neither natural nor enduring”; id *ibid*: 15) tiers: “the ‘old core’ areas of Western Europe, North America and Australasia”; the “new core”, consisting mostly of Japan, South Korea, Hong Kong and Singapore; “core extensions and potential cores”, which broadly correspond to rapidly industrialising urban corridors in East, Southeast and South Asia, Latin America, Central and Eastern Europe and South Africa; the “labour frontier”, made up of areas, usually in the geographical vicinity of the previous three tiers (including Central America, North Africa, South and Southeast Asia, etc.), which have been undergoing profound structural transformation as a result of interaction with those tiers, thus setting the stage

for massive outmigration flows; and “the resource niche”, which encompasses the rest of the world and includes various large tracts of the African, Asian and South American continents (id ibid:47-54).

The general theoretical propositions that drive the analysis may arguably be summarised as follows, at some risk of oversimplification: i) “people are highly mobile in each tier” and, as a general rule, always have been (id ibid:194) – the latter idea explicitly confronting the myth of peasant immobility; ii) most worldwide population movement takes place within each tier and, in particular, takes the form of rural-to-urban migration; and iii) the exception to the latter proposition is migration from the “labour frontier” to the other development tiers, which accounts for the bulk of South-North migration and is largely determined by the effects of the functional and spatial expansion of the capitalist mode of production along well-determined geographical paths (id ibid). In sum, population mobility is presented as inextricably linked to development, but the way in which this is done could not be further from the simple view of migration occurring mechanically from poorer to richer areas. Rather, international migration, urbanisation and proletarianisation (to lend a Marxist flavour to a formulation that does not seem too comfortable with explicitly assuming it) are presented as different aspects of the same process – one that is mediated by the complexities of history and geography to give rise to actually-existing migration systems.

## ***2.6 Systems and network approaches***

The last set of theoretical approaches to migration to be briefly presented in this chapter consists of the literature on migration systems and networks. More than full-fledged theories on the determinants of migration, these consist of analytical perspectives introduced based on the consideration that, given the self-evident systemic and network features of migration processes, the study of the latter stands to gain from the heuristic application to the field of migration of the concepts and insights derived from general systems theory and network analysis.

The idea of applying a systems approach to migration can be traced back to the work of Akin Mabogunje (1970:1-2), who suggested a conceptualisation of (rural-to-urban) migration as an open system made up of both matter (migrants, institutions and organisations) and energy (both kinetic – the actual flows – and potential – the stimuli

behind the flows). Like most other open systems, migration systems are additionally characterised by the existence of feedback mechanisms (cumulative causation), interactions with the surrounding environment, adjustment mechanisms and component subsystems (the various formal and informal institutions that regulate migration processes). In this article, however, Mabogunje did not proceed much further than contributing this seminal conceptualisation. Theoretically, the main proposition is that “one of the concomitants of the continued interaction between the system and its environment will be the phenomenon of growth in the system” (id *ibid*:1), but it is difficult to see why this should be so either in the framework of general systems theory (given that many systems are ‘exothermic’) or specifically in the case of migration (given that actually-existing migration systems eventually wane).

Despite the fact that its theoretical contributions failed to match its conceptual breakthroughs, the migration systems approach was met with considerable success. Not only did the expression itself become commonplace in the literature, it also became increasingly acknowledged that the study of actually-existing migration flows could be significantly improved by drawing on some of the insights suggested by Mabogunje. The Committee on International Migration of the International Union for the Scientific Study of Population, for example, explicitly endorsed a migration systems approach in much of its work in the 1980s (Kritz and Zlotnik 1992). However, some of the defining features of this approach were in fact lost, or changed, as of its dissemination process. Specifically, the disseminated version of the migration systems approach (Kritz and Zlotnik 1992; see also Massey 1993) largely discarded the idea of feeding abstract theoretical (as opposed to conceptual) insights from general systems analysis into the study of migration. What was retained above all was the idea of the heuristic worth of looking at sets of ‘sending’ and ‘receiving’ areas in a dynamic way and as open but relatively self-contained systems in interaction with other types of systems.

This stood in contrast to most of the previous literature, especially as concerned empirical studies of actually-existing migration streams. First, the call for consideration of both ends of migration flows in the assessment and analysis of those flows stood in opposition to those approaches that focused solely on one of the two ends, and in that sense paved the way for later calls for methodological transnationalism in migration studies (e.g. Wimmer and Glick-Schiller 2002). Second, concern with the dynamics of the various migration systems followed directly from the realisation of the existence of feedback mechanisms and from the acknowledgement of migration systems as having a momentum

and life-cycle of their own, whereby they are born, grow, mature and wane (hence synchronic analyses only capture a biased fraction of the whole process). Third, the idea that certain sets of 'sending' and 'receiving' areas (i.e. migration systems) make up more or less coherent 'wholes' that can be analysed in a relatively self-contained manner served to highlight the fundamental structures in an otherwise seemingly chaotic matrix of migration origins and destinations. This made even more sense in the second half of the 20th Century, when several new international migration systems, with their own specific characteristics and momentums, arose in previous metropolitan-colonial spaces. Finally, the inter-systemic element of the analysis built on the realisation that the flows of people are far from autonomous from a variety of other flows and structures and that, therefore, the study of the former should not overlook their interactions with the latter.

This last feature of the migration systems approach – arguably its most central one – is of course not exclusive to it: for example, Petras' and Sassen's historical-structural accounts (see above) also stressed the close geographical association between the global flows of labour and those of commodities and capital. Petras even referred to some of the other 'systems' (though not phrased as such) that co-determine the emergence, direction and intensity of migration flows, such as "political and economic networks" or "cultural affinity". This, along with the emphasis on historical dynamics, shows that the migration systems and historical-structural perspectives are not only logically compatible but also complementary, even concurrent, in many respects (despite the apparent failure of the migration literature to acknowledge this). The main difference between the two is in fact one of emphasis: most historical-structural authors have focused primarily on the functions served by labour migration in the context of capitalism as a world system, and regarded the issue of how it is that these functional *raison d'être*s translate into actual processes as a relatively secondary concern; whereas authors working in the migration systems tradition have mostly focused on the meso-level structures and processes that "stimulate, direct and maintain" (Fawcett 1989:671) specific systems in specific historical and geographical circumstances. These meso-level structures and processes provide the essential mediation between structural trends and constraints and the individual agency of migrants, households and organisations, and essentially consist of a variety of linkages that serve to facilitate or constrain the flow of people between two or more specific areas given the existence of "potential energy" in the system as a whole. Arguably, one of the most useful and comprehensive taxonomies of those linkages is that suggested by Fawcett (1989:674-8),

who subsumed them under four main categories: “state-to-state relations”, “mass culture connections”, “family and personal networks” and “migrant agency activities”.

One specific type of linkage that would fall under the fourth category indicated above and which plays a particularly important role in channelling and sustaining migration flows is that of migration networks (Boyd 1989, Gurak and Caces 1992, Vertovec 2002). These consist of social networks, either based on pre-existent kinship, friendship or community ties or constituted for the specific purpose of sustaining migration (e.g. human smuggling networks), which in the context of migration become crucial channels for the flow of people, resources and information. These networks “reduce the costs and risks of migration” (Massey *et al* 1993:449) by “buffering migrants from the costs and disruptions of migration; insulating migrants from the destination society and maintaining their links to the origin society; determining, to a degree, who migrates from communities and households; influencing the selection of destination and origin sites; conditioning the integration of migrants in the destination society; serving as channels for information, other resources and normative structures; and shaping the size and momentum of migration” (Gurak and Caces 1992:153).

Whether or not migrant networks are the primary drivers of a given migration system as of its inception, it is virtually inevitable that such networks arise and be consolidated as the migration system matures. In this sense, they “flesh out migration systems” (id *ibid*:166) and constitute a feedback mechanism that contributes to cumulative causation. Inasmuch as migration systems can themselves be argued to ‘flesh out’ the structural trends and constraints at work in the capitalist world system as far as labour circulation is concerned, the migration systems and networks approaches arguably make it possible to bridge the micro-macro and agency-structure gaps – an idea that is further elaborated in the next section.

## ***2.7 Conclusion: towards a renewed historical-structural synthesis***

Having presented and discussed the main theoretical approaches to the phenomenon of migration, the view endorsed in this thesis is that the neoclassical theory of migration, in any of its avatars (‘standard’ or NELM), is inherently incapable of coming to terms with the reality of past and present migration flows. Like with many other social processes, the most relevant determinants, trends and constraints to migration are to be found at the structural



level, and cannot be derived through aggregation – hence the theoretical superiority of the historical-structural approach. However, the latter is arguably in need of a new and improved synthesis, given the fact that it is scattered throughout a variety of partial models and explanations with emphases on different elements of the same process, and its neglect of relevant insights from complementary theoretical contributions that are in fact logically consistent with the historical-structural perspective.

This section concludes this chapter by briefly outlining what such a renewed historical-structural synthesis might look like. First of all, it would begin by acknowledging that the study of actually-existing migration flows must rely on the historical method, rather than on the deduction of outcomes from hypothesised assumptions regarding individual behaviour. This is a direct consequence of the fact that many of the central factors involved in migration occur, and make themselves manifest, at the structural level. Second, even the most casual glance at the historical evidence would lead to the conclusion that migration in the past two to three centuries has been inextricably linked to the emergence, development and expansion of capitalism as a world system: at the local level, under the guise of the massively revolutionary process of urbanisation; at the global level, and especially in the post-WWII period, through the predominance of the flows from the ‘labour frontiers’ to the various regional and global ‘cores’ (Skeldon 1997). In this respect, the historical-structural synthesis would bring together the important insights from dual labour market theory, from more orthodox Marxist accounts of the functions of labour immigration in advanced capitalism and from theoretical accounts of the migration-inducing effect of the penetration of commodity and capitalist relations in the areas of origin.

In the meantime, such a renewed historical-structural synthesis would arguably prove most powerful and innovative if it acknowledged the fact that a number of ‘theories’ of migration which are often depicted as rivals of the historical-structural perspective are in fact ontologically, methodologically and theoretically consistent with it. Specifically, that is the case of the mobility transition, migration systems and migration network approaches to migration. Thus, if we take countries, or social formations, as our units of analysis, we find that the historical and structural processes that we have been referring to take place in relatively homologous ways from one social formation to the next, subject to their specific position both in the hierarchy of the world system and in ‘world time’ (Skeldon 1990). Consequently, several insights from the mobility transition approach, especially in the

modified version put forth by Skeldon (1997), can certainly be fruitfully incorporated into this historical-structural synthesis.

Moreover, the concrete forms assumed by the general tendencies laid out in the standard historical-structural accounts depend on a range of concrete, complex and contingent circumstances, which have been competently addressed by the systemic and network approaches. Here, in fact, the latter two approaches add significantly to the explanatory power of the accounts of some historical-structural authors, whose emphasis on labour flowing in the opposite direction of capital has perhaps been excessive. True, the historical evidence seems to indicate that the disruption brought about by the introduction of commodity and capitalist relations is a crucial cause behind the creation of potentially migratory populations in today's world. However, other factors and 'systems' come into play in determining the emergence, scale and direction of concrete migration flows, such as language and cultural factors, the 'relative autonomy' of the state system, or the ways in which the individual agency of migrants, especially through migration networks, can both consolidate existing structures and, at times, introduce changes to those structures. As Marx himself put it in an oft-quoted passage of the *Grundrisse* (1973:101), "the concrete is the concentration of many determinations", and scholars claiming to adhere to this intellectual tradition ought not to overlook this caveat.

Hopefully, all of the above has rendered sufficiently clear the reasons why the historical-structural theoretical approach to migration is the one adopted in the context of this research project, albeit in a relatively syncretic form that takes account of insights from several logically compatible theoretical contributions. Against this theoretical background, in Part II of this thesis we shall be looking at how internal and international migration flows within and from Guinea-Bissau have been taking place in relation to wider structural processes under way both within this social formation and in the world system more generally; which concrete forms and characteristics it is that these flows have taken on; and how it is that they have acquired a momentum of their own.

### 3. Development and change

In order for it to be possible to undertake any meaningful and coherent investigation or discussion of the migration-development nexus, it is essential that we first clarify what it is that is meant by *development*, and preferably that we lay out what our theoretical understanding of it is. If we do not have a clear idea of what it is that brings about development, or worse if we are unable to lay out what it consists of, we shall hardly be able to make a convincing case with respect to whether migration (or indeed any other factor or process) contributes to fostering it or hindering it. This is a more serious and widespread difficulty than it might seem, for in reality the meaning of “development” is especially fluid and contentious. As argued by Ziai (2009:183, 195-6), it is “an empty signifier that can be filled with almost any content (...), [usually] taken to be synonymous with progress, improvement, positive social change, poverty reduction, and better standard of living. (...) But it is also obvious that the signifier ‘development’ [can] refer to completely different projects and thus signifieds”. The field of the migration-development nexus is a good example of this, for there is much greater agreement on what the various channels are through which migration can be expected to influence development than on what development actually means and how it takes place (both of which are usually left unexplained and implicitly equated with each author’s own understanding) (see Chapter 4, below).

In this thesis, as indicated in the Introduction, I adopt a historical materialist understanding of development that draws on the work of Karl Marx and various later Marxist authors. According to this understanding, development consists of the quantitative process of expansion of the productive forces (means of production and the technical organisation of production), punctuated by qualitative changes in the social relations of production that both render possible and constrain that expansion. It is a strictly non-normative understanding of development, which does not regard it as either good or bad (at least, during the logical moment of analysis), but rather seeks to analyse the historical development of societies in as objective a manner as other sciences address the development of the human body as it grows older, or the development of living forms as they evolve from each other.

In order to account for this specific theoretical understanding of development, this chapter is organised as follows. First, it briefly lays out some of the main competing (i.e. non-historical materialist) theories of economic development (3.1). Then, it provides an overview and discussion of the main competing views on development and underdevelopment *within* Marxism (classical Marxism and dependency theory) (3.2). I then address the specific issue of the articulation and transition between different modes of production, with special reference to the agrarian context (3.3), before closing the chapter with a summary of the reasons for endorsing a classical historical-materialist theoretical framework and its implications for the empirical investigation (3.4). Due to lack of space, the presentation of these theoretical debates is necessarily undertaken at a somewhat superficial level. The aim is simply to provide a focused discussion of the key aspects of some of the main theories and contributions, the reader being directed to the various references included in the text for additional depth and detail.

### ***3.1 A birds-eye view of economic development theory***

In addition to the Marxist and neo-Marxist theoretical accounts of development and underdevelopment, which shall be addressed in the next section, there are two other main ‘families’ of theories of economic development: neoclassical growth theories and structuralist theories of development. Let us look at each of these and their key features.

#### ***3.1.1 Neoclassical growth theories***

Even though there are many different neoclassical long-run growth models, they all share a number of general features that enable us to include them within the same current: (i) the assumption that all economies are subject to the same laws of economic development, which are unvarying both across countries and over time (i.e. no allowance is made for differentiation depending on the position in the world system, the mode of production or the stage in the development process, as in competing theories<sup>7</sup>); (ii) the identification of development with economic growth and the identification of the latter, most typically, with the rate of change in output or output *per capita* (thus these are theories of economic

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<sup>7</sup> Obviously, in these models countries may differ with respect to their endowments of the various factors and with regard to the aggregate effect of individual preferences. However, while the variables and parameters may change, the basic structure of the growth models (i.e. the “functional form”) does not.

growth rather than development, for there is no theoretical room for a distinct concept of development); and iii) their predilection for mathematical reasoning and presentation, implying independence of the dependent variable vis-à-vis excluded variables (although “stochastic” error is, rather paradoxically, made allowance for in econometric estimation exercises), stability of functional relationships and, generally speaking, homogeneity of the production factors considered<sup>8</sup>. Additionally, most neoclassical models are also characterised by iv) microeconomic underpinnings that assume rational and optimising behaviour on the part of individuals and firms; and v) the expected in-built tendency of economies to grow at, or move towards, an equilibrium ‘steady state’ or ‘natural rate of growth’. The later two features are typical of most models that we characterise here as neoclassical, but not all: for example, the Harrod-Domar model does not assume inter-temporal rational optimisation, while endogenous growth models make allowance for divergence (see below).

Generally speaking, neoclassical growth models have their roots in classical political economy’s taxonomy of the factors of production as consisting of land, labour and capital, usually traced back to Adam Smith (1776) and David Ricardo (1817)<sup>9</sup>. They also draw indirectly on these classical authors’ seminal understanding of the virtues and efficiency of markets as decentralised coordination mechanisms (the “invisible hand”: Smith 1776), and of the division of labour as allowing for maximum efficiency (at the level of individuals and firms in Smith 1776; at the level of nations and through specialisation based on comparative advantage in Ricardo 1817). However, the latter takes place indirectly, via their *neoclassical* microeconomic foundations – which consist in the understanding of the equation of marginal utilities and marginal productivities leading to Pareto-optimal outcomes, and the assumption of societies being an aggregate of rational individuals that behave in such an optimising way.

In line with the above, neoclassical growth models are usually based on variations of the production function  $Y = f(K, N, L, A, S)$ , where  $Y$  stands for total output,  $K$  for the capital stock,  $N$  for natural resources,  $L$  for labour,  $A$  for the stock of applied knowledge and  $S$  for the socioeconomic milieu (Rostow 1990, cit. in Snowdon and Vane 2005:597). It is worth noting (i) the implicit assumptions of homogeneous production factors and

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<sup>8</sup> This characterisation of the fundamental features of neoclassical growth theories enables us to subsume models sometimes described as neo-Keynesian (like the Harrod-Domar model: see below) in this category.

<sup>9</sup> Although the work of Smith and Ricardo in this respect in fact drew on previous work by the Physiocrats (Quesnay, 1759).

‘Smithian’ optimal allocation of those factors; and (ii) the fact that models differ depending on which of these variables are included and how their functional relationships are conceptualised, but not with regard to the postulated universality of a fundamental equation determining output levels. Now, given that the rate of economic growth (“development”) is in this context defined simply as  $(Y' - Y) / Y$ , which depends solely on the functional form “f” and the endowments of the various production factors, ‘all’ that is required in order to unlock the mysteries of development is to ascertain the adequate form of the production function and what the determinants are of the stock of the various production factors.

As mentioned above, early political economists, especially Smith, had already put forth major theoretical contributions on the causes of growth that focused on the division of labour, specialisation and efficient allocation through market mechanisms. Generally speaking, the neoclassical models of the 20<sup>th</sup> and early 21<sup>st</sup> Centuries have taken these as their starting points, and focused on seeking to formalise the relationship between the output level (and growth rate) and the production factors (as ‘ingredients’). The first major set of contributions in this context consisted of the very similar models put forth independently by Roy Harrod (1939) and Evsey Domar (1946), which assumed exogenous population change as well as constant capital-labour and capital-output ratios. Further assuming that increases in the capital stock are determined by the savings rate (minus capital depreciation), the Harrod-Domar model leads straightforwardly to the conclusion that economic growth is a function of the investment rate, which itself depends on the savings rate. That is to say, when people are willing to accept less present consumption in exchange for more future consumption, they save more, invest more, and higher output obtains in the subsequent periods as a result (Harrod 1939, Domar 1946). This allowed for the extremely influential conclusion that increasing the capital stock is the fundamental driver of growth and the major goal that planners should aim for (given that, despite all of their other more strictly neoclassical features, this model generally assumed, in Keynesian fashion, the possibility of sub-optimal inter-temporal resource allocation by individuals and firms, leaving room for a benevolent planner to nudge the economy to an optimum)<sup>10</sup> (Snowdon and Vane 2005).

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<sup>10</sup> In the meantime, a later extension of the Harrod-Domar model was put forth by Hollis Chenery (Chenery and Bruno 1962, Chenery and Strout 1966), which made allowance for developing countries being constrained by two idiosyncratic gaps that prevent them from autonomously pursuing capital accumulation and growth. These consist of a gap in domestic savings vis-à-vis capital requirements and a gap in foreign exchange vis-à-vis required imports of capital goods, by virtue of

The Harrod-Domar model was extremely influential and indeed constituted the basis for the Solow model (Solow 1956, often also referred to as the Solow-Swan model), which took over from the former a couple of decades later as the dominant theoretical framework for the analysis of growth among neoclassical economists. In this process of succession, some features of the Harrod-Domar model that were deemed less palatable – namely, the assumption of fixed technology (i.e. fixed capital-labour and capital-output ratios) and the underlying assumption of sub-optimal inter-temporal allocation – were dropped. In the Solow-Swan model, the capital-output relationship is mediated by a ‘technology’ term that is determined exogenously (as are the population growth rate and the capital depreciation rate), while labour and capital are regarded as substitutes in accordance with a Cobb-Douglas functional relationship. Thus,  $Y = AK^\alpha L^{1-\alpha}$ , with  $A$  representing exogenously-determined technology. This functional form of the production function implies decreasing returns to capital increases (for  $\alpha < 1$  by construction) and, as the key conclusions, economies will naturally tend to approach a “steady state” growth rate where investment is just enough to compensate for population increases and capital depreciation (whose effect is identical), *and* different economies will tend to converge, for capital will flow into more labour-abundant economies and areas to take advantage of the greater marginal productivity of capital there (the “convergence hypothesis”). Under steady-state long-run growth, capital increases merely ensure the *maintenance* of the level of output per worker – although, crucially, exogenously-determined changes in technology (which is deemed a universal public good) may increase it for every country. This is why this model, and the family of models that constitute variations around it, are also referred to as exogenous growth models (Snowdon and Vane 2005).

The central conclusion of the Solow model that growth in output *per capita* can in the long run only be accounted for by a variable which is exogenous to the model (technological change) is of course deeply unsatisfactory in theory and discouraging in practice, but it did not prevent it from constituting the dominant neoclassical framework for addressing long-run growth for decades (in yet another display of neoclassical economics’ lack of touch with reality). However, after a while this problem led to attempts at endogenising growth, which constituted the basis for so-called new growth theory – the more sophisticated form assumed by the neoclassical theory of economic growth from the 1980s onwards. Two main and interrelated pathways have been followed in order to allow

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which the model came to be known as the “two-gap model” (*cf.* Bender and Löwenstein 2005). The inflow of capital from abroad through foreign assistance is deemed the key way to meet both gaps.

for output growth to be determined endogenously and for actually-existing divergence among economies to be accounted for. The first one consisted of dropping the assumption of decreasing returns to capital accumulation in the Solow model, by allowing  $\alpha=1$ . This is the central feature of what is usually referred to as the AK model, put forth in the early 1960s by Marvin Frankel (1962) and Kenneth Arrow (1962), but which constituted a “neglected early contribution to the theory of economic growth” for decades by virtue of the preponderance of the Solow model. The basic idea is that in the process of accumulating capital, firms also contribute to the production of knowledge (which spills over), and, as a consequence, the effect of capital accumulation is not bound to be neutralised by diminishing returns. More broadly, the human capital version of the endogenous growth model proposed by Paul Romer (1986) suggested, instead of knowledge spill-overs being ‘just right’ to allow for the unitary marginal productivity of capital as in the AK model, that the technological term  $A$  be endogenised by making it a function of the increases in the capital stock. The key assumptions behind this are that knowledge is not a public good but takes the form of human capital associated with workers; that firms and individuals have an incentive to invest in that human capital like they do to invest in ‘traditional’ capital; and that, as they undertake those investments, some knowledge spill-overs occur to the economy as a whole, increasing  $A$  and allowing for endogenous long-run growth.

Thus, endogenous growth models, whether in their AK or Romer versions, restore the possibility of decisions to save and invest (in capital or human capital) determining the long-run rate of growth, and make allowance for cross-country divergence. Ironically, these were features that already existed in the Harrod-Domar model, so we may well refer to the evolution of neoclassical growth theory in the 20th Century in this respect as a case of ‘one step back, one step forward’. Indeed, later developments in neoclassical growth theory (like the Augmented Solow Model by Mankiw *et al* 1992) in fact took the theory again one step back by going back to the Solow model, modifying it by including human capital so as to be able to account for both relatively prolonged effects of the savings rate upon growth and for cross-country inequality, but nevertheless positing once again the existence of a universal long-run steady-state of growth to which all economies must converge.

In sum, the evolution of the neoclassical theory of growth consists of a set of hesitant and contradictory steps aimed at providing some limited realism and explanatory power to an intrinsically flawed account. Building on unrealistic assumptions, it reaches unrealistic conclusions – and remains incapable of providing competent explanations for



actual historical processes, in which it is most often interested only as data points in the context of econometric exercises. Of course, this is less surprising when we take into account that neoclassical economics relies exclusively on categories of analysis that are ahistorical, and that it does not even make allowance for a concept of development as distinct from economic growth. These are problems that, as mentioned in the context of Chapter 2 (above), are more than just theoretical: they have their roots in this paradigm's core of methodological individualism, rational choice and hypothetical-deductivism.

### *3.1.2 Structuralist theories of economic development*

By contrast to the neoclassical models, structuralist theories of development consist of those that regard development as a process of structural socioeconomic change whereby underdeveloped economies overcome specific structural barriers, after which they are finally able to pursue a path of self-sustained growth. Development is thus understood as the *qualitative* growth-enabling process of overcoming those barriers, although some of these theories postulate that underdeveloped economies are constrained by broader structures operating at the level of the world economy from changing their own internal structures in such a growth-inducing way. In the meantime, the reader may notice that if we define structuralist theories of economic development in this way, the historical materialist theory of development, too, must be regarded as belonging to this group. That is largely true, for Marxist theory indeed has a structural character (in a broad sense), insofar as it stresses the constraining role of qualitative structures upon quantitative growth as well as the dialectical relationship between the former and the latter. Thus, the theories of economic development usually referred to as structuralist consist in fact of the group of non-Marxist structuralist theories, and that standard practice is followed throughout this chapter.

The first and perhaps best-known of these theories, which indeed was explicitly put forward as a “non-Communist Manifesto”, was Walt Rostow's (1960) stages-of-growth theory (also known as the “take-off model”). It postulates that societies go through five stages as they modernise: traditional society; preconditions for take-off; take-off; drive to maturity; and high mass consumption – and that each society proceeds linearly through all of them once a number of conditions are met that enable the progression from stage to stage. In this theoretical framework, underdeveloped economies are peculiar in that they find themselves at the earlier stages, but all economies are alike in that they progress

mechanically through the various stages. The progression from stage to stage is not constrained by the fact that modernisation takes place belatedly; instead, development is postulated to be eventually attained by all and to be a consequence of structural changes that, crucially, depend on human will and voluntary actions (investment in capital, education, establishment of a robust financial sector, promotion of entrepreneurship, etc.) (cf. Menzel 2006).

Another important early proponent of a non-Marxist 'stages' approach to economic development was Alexander Gerschenkron (1962), who emphasised "economic backwardness" as being characterised by low productivity, low capital intensity, less advanced technologies, low literacy and other constraining features. In this theory, development consists of the move from economic backwardness to economic development, in spurts, through the diversion of resources to capital goods, growth in firm and plant scale, and the move away from agriculture, all of which can and should be actively supported by the government. Contrary to Rostow's linear theory, an 'agricultural revolution' is not deemed a necessary pre-requisite and "latecomer" economies are regarded as able to skip stages by adopting the technologies and forms of social organisation of more advanced economies, spurred on by example and relative deprivation – hence his theory is most distinctive in its postulation of the possibility, indeed likelihood, of catching-up and convergence (Gerschenkron 1962; cf. Gwynne 2006).

Three other 'pioneers' of development economics as a distinct field were Paul Rosenstein-Rodan (1943), Kurt Mandelbaum (1945) and Ragnar Nurkse (1953), whose work followed close and parallel lines. The shared key features of the work of these authors, albeit expressed in different ways, were that backward economies are trapped in a "low-level equilibrium trap" (Rosenstein-Rodan) or "vicious circle of poverty" (Nurkse), which causes those economies to be structurally unable to develop unless a simultaneous "big push" takes place across different sectors, necessarily assisted by the government so that the problem of coordinating different agents and sectors is overcome. When we take a closer look at the specific mechanisms behind low-level stagnation in these authors' work, we find many of the same key issues addressed in neoclassical theory: namely, the need to mobilise savings for investment and the need to foster the network externalities across industries that obtain from capital accumulation. However, the crucial differences vis-à-vis neoclassical theories lay in the fact that these authors regard these problems as a specific feature of underdeveloped economies, and that no automatic way out of them is made

allowance for in the absence of government intervention, which needs to take the form of the aforementioned “big push”.

Yet another seminal contribution in the context of the emergence of development economics, which we have already alluded to in the context of our overview of migration theory (Chapter 2, above), was the work of Arthur Lewis (1954, 1955). As we have seen, Lewis was most influential through his dual-sector model of developing economies, which postulated the co-existence of a traditional agrarian sector where the productivity of labour is nil or negligible, and a modern sector which exhibits the ‘normal’ features that neoclassical economics focuses on. The redundant labour from the traditional sector provides “unlimited supplies of labour” to the modern sector, accounting for the specific patterns assumed by wages, profits and prices in these economies (Lewis 1954). In this model, development is constrained not by insufficient labour supplies, but by the “inability of the agrarian sector (...) to trade with the industrial sector, so that industrialisation would need either a rapid increase in agricultural productivity or export markets” (Szeftel 2006:146). The policy implications resonate those of the advocates of the ‘big push’ addressed above, since simultaneous rapid industrialisation and rapid increase in agrarian productivity are presented as necessary in order to improve the terms of trade and decrease rural poverty, thereby permitting growth.

While the structuralist writers mentioned so far generally regarded participation in international trade as an invariably positive ingredient in any development strategy, the version of structuralism developed by the UN’s Economic Commission on Latin America in the 1960s and 1960s under the auspices of Raul Prebisch (1950) did not. The key building block of Prebisch’s theoretical views and policy prescriptions (which drew on earlier work by Hans Singer, hence came to be known as the “Prebisch-Singer hypothesis”) consisted of the fact that the terms of trade between developed and developing countries tend to deteriorate over time to the detriment of the latter. There is thus a distinct differentiation within the world system between a developed and industrialised “core” and an underdeveloped and agrarian “periphery”, with trade between the two involving structural and increasing disadvantage to the latter (attributed to the lesser bargaining power of labour in the periphery). It is therefore clear that there were close similarities between the views of Prebisch and the ECLA structuralists, and those of later dependency theorists writing from a neo-Marxist perspective (see below, this Chapter), who were indeed significantly influenced by the former. However, while *dependentistas* conceptualised the mechanism of unequal exchange in terms of a systematic extraction of surplus-value in the

sphere of circulation, Prebisch did not frame it in similarly Marxist terms; and while some of the former called for de-linkage from international trade as a response, the latter instead advocated de-emphasising the export of primary commodities, fostering industrialisation and developing the domestic market (Kay 2006). This would provide the theoretical foundations for import-substitution industrialisation, which became a popular, if ultimately rather unsuccessful, policy strategy in the 1960s and 1970s, particularly in Latin America.

All in all, it is undeniable that structuralist development theories have made major theoretical and empirical contributions to the study of economic development, in addition to buttressing the legitimacy of, and interest in, this field of study in its own right. However, my view is that, by typically focusing on features that are but partial or epiphenomenal components of the broader process of economic development, these authors have largely missed the forest for the trees – and consequently misidentified some of the crucial determinants of the very features and processes that, in each case, they have purported to address.

### ***3.2 Marxist perspectives: modes of production and dependency***

#### ***3.2.1 Historical materialism: the basics***

Historical materialism is synonymous with the Marxist theory of the historical development of societies, and consists in the application of the dialectical materialist philosophical conception to the study of human history. Its materialist character is best summed up in the postulate that “it is not the consciousness of men that determines the social existence of material conditions, but their social existence that determines their consciousness” (Marx 1977[1859]:11). This runs counter to the Hegelian conception of history, and indeed to any conception that presupposes that the course of history is determined by the imposition of human will to circumstances. At a high level of abstraction, the material conditions referred to above consist most fundamentally of two inter-related aspects: productive forces (means of production and the technical relations of production) and social-productive relations (the relations that people enter into in the course of modifying nature and producing use-values, i.e. “anything necessary, useful or pleasant”: Marx 1977[1859]:20). This articulated combination of productive forces and social-productive relations, again at the abstract level, is called a mode of production: slavery, feudalism and

capitalism are examples of modes of production that have actually existed throughout history, for each is or was characterised by a certain level of development of productive forces, simultaneously rendered possible and constrained by the social relations of production that also characterise(d) each of them (Hindess and Hirst 1975).

The historical materialist conception additionally posits that each mode of production has its own 'laws of motion', which determine the pace of development of the productive forces. The "dialectical" component of this theoretical conception corresponds to the thesis that the engine of history consists of the tensions and contradictions extant within each mode of production (between the classes extant within them, and between the level of development of the productive forces and the ultimately constraining role of the social-productive configurations). On a time-scale of centuries, these tensions and contradictions ultimately build up to such an extent that it becomes impossible to preserve the existing mode of production, and a new one arises in its place with a new class structure and new laws of motion. This is what accounts for the replacement of slavery with feudalism, and of the latter with capitalism.

The capitalist mode of production is characterised by the centrality of the capital relation: the wage employment of 'free' labourers by the owners of the means of production with a view to the accumulation of capital via exploitation, i.e. the extraction of surplus-value (the difference between the value of what workers produce and what they earn). Subjection of the workers to an exploitative relation is made possible by their previous dispossession of the means of production – they are forced to sell their labour-power in order to survive. At the same time, capitalists themselves are subject to a key compulsion: by virtue of the fact that capitalism is characterised by the generalised production of *commodities*, competition from other capitalists forces each capitalist to constantly mobilise the previously extracted surplus-value as capital (i.e. to plough it back into the purchase and employment of additional labour-power and additional means of production, and to improve and upgrade production methods in order to achieve greater efficiency). Generally speaking (in the absence of monopoly and other modifications to this basic schema), those capitalists that do not act thus are unable to sell and, consequently, thrown out of the market (Marx 1982[1867]).

The capital relation thus contains within itself an in-built tendency for the constant upgrading and expansion of production: "the bourgeoisie cannot exist without constantly revolutionising the instruments of production" (Marx and Engels 1969[1848]:8). This is

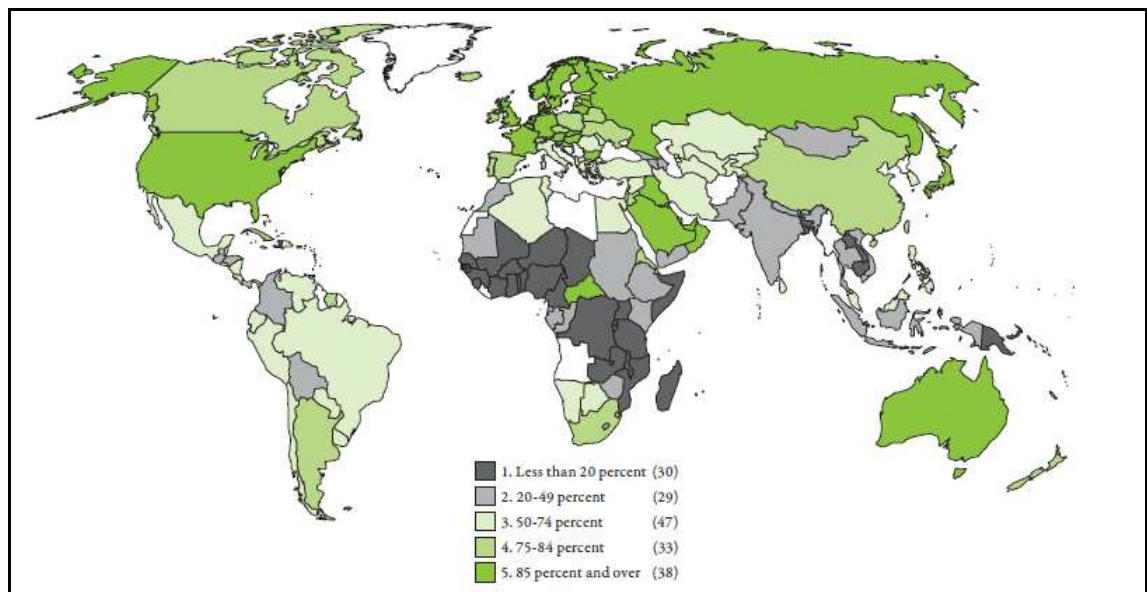
historically unprecedented, for previous modes of production were essentially static in that they were not characterised by any similar mechanism whereby production might be similarly subject to such incessant compulsions for the development of the productive forces. Quite the contrary: their 'laws of motion' largely ensured the preservation of the *status quo*, which is why they translated into only very slow and gradual change in the material conditions of life, and maintained themselves largely unchanged over centuries or millennia, whereas the period following the emergence and expansion of capitalism has been characterised by historically-unprecedented economic growth.

Faced with such a simple and powerful explanation for the mechanism that drives capital accumulation and economic growth, it is either comic or tragic (or both) to read Snowden and Vane (2005:597), in their otherwise brilliant treatment of modern macroeconomics, pose the question "Why have some countries grown rich while other remain poor? It is hard to think of a more fundamental question for economists to answer", only to follow it with a lengthy enumeration of models and theories that take capitalism to be universal and to have been with us from the early days of humankind, while completely ignoring the Marxist account. Only ignorance or ideological reluctance can account for such disregard for what is arguably the most powerful explanation of modern economic growth to credibly fit the historical evidence.

Of course, this is not say that the historical origins of capitalism – and particularly the fact that it originated and developed earlier in some regions rather than others – need not be accounted for. Quite the contrary, and in fact there has been much debate about these issues. I would argue that one of the most powerful explanations for the head start of Western Eurasia in the pre-capitalist period is that put forth by Jared Diamond (1997), which is based on geographical conditions that favoured the adoption and subsequent development of food production, animal husbandry, writing and other technologies. However, the fact that capitalism emerged in England out of all the regions with similarly advanced levels of technological development at the dawn of capitalism (including much of the remainder of Western Eurasia, or China) has to do with factors and features that are absent from Diamond's account. These, too, have been the object of much discussion, epitomised in the debates between Maurice Dobb (1946) and Paul Sweezy (1976) and in the debates around the contributions of Robert Brenner (1976, 1982). Competing explanations have revolved around the external imposition of capitalism upon feudalism through trade (Sweezy), or, alternatively, capitalism arising out of feudalism by virtue of contradictions inherent to feudalism itself, resolved according to the power of the various

classes in contention (Dobb, Brenner). Crucially, whatever the case, it is clear that capitalism originally arose in England as a *rural and agrarian* phenomenon in the middle of the second millennium AD, and that it was only the creation of a proletariat out of the dispossessed peasantry and the accumulation of agrarian capital which obtained as a result of agrarian capitalist relations that rendered possible industrialisation a few centuries later (Wood 2002).

Once it had emerged, capitalism began to spread, once again by virtue of its own internal 'laws of motion'. The in-built compulsion upon capitalists to accumulate ceaselessly requires that they seek to subject, by economic or political means, ever-increasing portions of the geographical and social worlds to the imperative of accumulation: "Capitalism is the first mode of economy (...) which tends to engulf the entire globe and to stamp out all other economies, tolerating no rival at its side. Yet at the same time it is also the first mode of economy which is unable to exist by itself, which needs other economic systems as a medium and soil" (Luxemburg 1913:447). The geographical widening and social deepening of capitalist social-productive relations has been a long and protracted process, however: even after a few centuries of capitalism being in existence, only about 47% of the world's employed population (and about 27% of the total working-age population) are currently estimated to be directly subject to capitalist social-productive relations (wage or salaried employment) (ILO 2010:54). I am well aware of the significant problems that beset attempts at quantification of this key aspect, but the figure nevertheless provides a valuable indication. And of course it is not a coincidence that there is a very close correspondence between the share of the wage and salaried in the employed population and the level of development of the productive forces – hence the level of 'development' as broad signifier (Figure 3.1).



**Figure 3.1 Percentage of wage and salaried workers among those employed worldwide, latest available year<sup>11</sup>**

The above is not the same as saying that social formations that are more ‘backward’ (in the sense that they objectively find themselves at an earlier stage of a transition that is postulated to be bound to occur universally) are somehow immune or isolated with regard to capitalism. Nor that the segments of those formations that are predominantly organised along non-capitalist logics do not interact with capitalism. Quite the contrary: they maintain meaningful linkages – through trade, the provision of means of subsistence, the provision of labour-power as they disintegrate or on a seasonal basis, etc. However, it is the fact that their predominant form of social-productive organisation has taken longer to become capitalist (hence to adopt ‘laws of motion’ conducive to expanded accumulation) that is to account for their lesser degree of ‘development’. The key determinants of the level of development of the productive forces are therefore features that are internal to the social formations and consist of their social-productive configurations.

Of course, the social-productive configurations of less developed social formations do not develop in isolation from what is taking place elsewhere. Moreover, these formations may be, and indeed are, subject to ‘secondary’ surplus extraction on the part of more advanced social formations. Even though the latter is arguably only a compounding factor, not the determining one, it is on this secondary surplus extraction that the neo-Marxist theories addressed in the next section have largely focused on.

<sup>11</sup> Source: ILO (2010:56).



### *3.2.2 Competing neo-Marxist theories: Dependency theory and world-systems analysis*

Dependency theory is an eclectic theoretical current that arose in the 1960s and 1970s and is mostly associated with the work of Andre Gunder Frank, Samir Amin, Fernando Henrique Cardoso, Walter Rodney and, to a more debatable extent, Giovanni Arrighi and Immanuel Wallerstein<sup>12</sup>. In explicit opposition to all other theoretical approaches (including Marxist) that regard underdevelopment as the result of insufficient (capitalist) development and modernisation, dependency theorists generally maintain that the lack of development experienced in 'peripheral' countries is itself the result of a process of impoverishment and distortion, or the "development of underdevelopment" (Frank 1974), which is a direct result of subordinated participation in a polarised and hierarchical world system. The principal focus of the attention of these authors has therefore been on the mechanisms that bring about dependent underdevelopment.

Generally speaking, two types of mechanisms have been postulated by dependency theorists to bring about underdevelopment and the impoverishment of the "periphery" to the advantage of the "core" (two key concepts in this line of thinking): the first one consists in the systematic extraction of the surplus from the periphery to the core through such means as plunder (most relevant in the early days of colonialism) and unequal exchange (most relevant in its later stages); the other consists of the distortions introduced upon the domestic political and economic structures of peripheral social formations by virtue of their subordination, e.g. through the constitution of a "comprador bourgeoisie" that earns its gains from complicity with the international extraction of the surplus rather than from 'autonomous' capitalist exploitation (*cf.* Frank 1966).

Dependency theory is not only eclectic, but also has eclectic roots. On the one hand, most of its most representative authors have explicitly claimed to work in the Marxist tradition, and indeed drawn on such fundamental Marxist categories of analysis as capitalism, bourgeoisie and surplus-value. However, they have also departed radically from the classical Marxist tradition in many key respects, chief among which is the idea that the defining feature of the transition to capitalism consists of being linked through trade with the capitalist world system as a whole, rather than in the internal adoption of capitalist social-productive relations. For that reason, but for the case of a few isolated areas, the entire world is deemed to have long been "capitalist" (Frank and Gills 1993). Additionally,

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<sup>12</sup> It is worth stressing again that these are but a selection of the most representative and influential authors.

the principal mechanism of exploitation and impoverishment is deemed to occur in the sphere of *circulation* (rather than that of production), in stark contrast to the standard Marxist interpretation. Instead of Marxist, this interpretation may therefore be traced, through Sweezy (a Marxist with a Smithian account of the origins of capitalism: see above), all the way back to Adam Smith (Brenner 1977).

The other main theoretical foundation of dependency theory consisted of the work by Prebisch and Singer on the deterioration of the terms of trade to the detriment of the periphery, which was subsequently developed, adapted and formulated in Marxist terms along two parallel lines by Paul Baran (1957) and Arghiri Emmanuel (1969). The Baran line of argument was largely based on the concentration of monopoly power in developed countries enabling the extraction of super-profits; whereas Emmanuel's version of unequal exchange was based on the effect upon relative prices of higher wage levels in the core (themselves a result of previous victories on the part of labour) and, consequently, upon international terms of trade. Together and in varying proportions, these became the fundamental explanatory mechanisms among dependency theorists for surplus extraction from the periphery to the core, which in turn became the fundamental mechanism accounting for underdevelopment. It is therefore not surprising that the resulting policy and political implications should consist first and foremost in the call for de-linkage from the world system, so that the periphery is able to develop unconstrained.

In the meantime, reflecting the aforementioned eclectic character of this current of thought, an autonomous current gradually emerged from within it that became known as world-systems analysis<sup>13</sup>. Largely associated with, and led by, Immanuel Wallerstein (1974, 1980, 1989, 2004), world-systems analysis shared dependency theory's general views that the capitalist world-system is everywhere a reality (what others would label as different modes of production are regarded as different modes of labour appropriation within capitalism: Wallerstein 2004) and that the underdevelopment of the periphery is largely accounted for by the control over monopolistic production processes in the core (indeed, that is what *defines* the core). World-systems analysis' account of development and underdevelopment is most original in positing the analytical relevance of introducing a third and intermediate layer: the semi-periphery, which shares some characteristics of both the

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<sup>13</sup> Despite having its roots in dependency theory, this theoretical approach considerably expanded its scope beyond development and underdevelopment, becoming a full-fledged theory of history and engaging in epistemological debates – most notably through its calls for a post-disciplinary approach to social science (Wallerstein 2004).

core and the periphery, and which is deemed the key *locus* of political struggles with the potential to affect the future development of the world-system (Wallerstein 2004).

Dependency scholars have made many relevant contributions to the analysis of underdevelopment, especially in their empirical analyses of the concrete historical forms assumed by the distorted and dependent development of peripheral social formations as a consequence of their political-economic subordination to the core (Leys 1977). However, their fundamentally Smithian understanding of what characterises capitalism and, as a consequence, what is to account for underdevelopment has been subjected to a sweeping critique, perhaps in its most thorough and devastating form by Robert Brenner (1977): through its emphasis on the sphere of circulation to the detriment of social-productive relations, dependency theory ended up implicitly equating all wealth with capital and all work with labour-power, thus finding itself on the same side as neoclassical theory in its lack of a convincing theoretical framework for accounting for the unprecedented development of the productive forces under capitalism. Still, while its basic premises and understanding of such key processes and concepts as capitalism and (under)development may be (in my view) flawed, I agree with the view of authors like Foster-Carter (1978) that the opposition between (classical) Marxist theory and (neo-Marxist) dependency theory has been much exaggerated, given that these are two currents of thought that, by and large, share the same ontology and methodology. Moreover, dependency theory has had the merit of casting additional light on the fact that the belated development of 'backward' social formations does not take place autonomously – but rather, to borrow freely from a much earlier Marxist author, in a combined and uneven way (Trotsky 1906).

### **3.3 Transitions and articulations**

If we endorse the thesis, as exposed in the previous section, that the 'laws of motion' intrinsic to the different modes of production are what is *primarily* to account for the different pace (and ultimately level) of development of the productive forces, then the issue of how it is that the transition from one mode of production to another takes place becomes a central one for any discussion on the issue of development.

The very question of which social-productive logics should be considered modes of production in their own right and which should not is itself an extremely contentious one, which has provoked much debate (partly due to Marx's own varying use of the term

*“Produktionsweise”* and his cursory discussion of pre-capitalist modes of production: Banaji 1977, Hindess and Hirst 1975). For example, should simple commodity production be considered a mode of production? Another key question concerns what the ultimate determinant of historical change is: does the level of development of the productive forces imply specific social relations of production (as in the ‘official State Marxism’ developed and vulgarised by Plekhanov and Stalin, which indeed can be legitimately traced back to Marx and Engels: *cf.* Rigby 1998)? Or do social-productive relations take causal precedence, both enabling and constraining the level of development of the productive forces and giving rise to class struggles that bring about subsequent changes (Hindess and Hirst 1975)?

Yet another fundamental question concerns the implications, for concrete analyses, of this ontological and theoretical framework: how are we to interpret the existence, within a given social formation, of social-productive arrangements that differ from the relational form that crystallises the essence of the mode of production (e.g. wage-labour under capitalism)? Do they constitute instances of the co-existence or articulation of different modes of production within a social formation, or is there only one mode of production – presumably that which corresponds to the (statistically?) predominant concrete arrangements –, to which all the different concrete arrangements are functionally subordinated regardless of their form (*cf.* Banaji 1977)? Different answers to these questions and problems have been put forth, in a series of theoretical discussions that reached a paroxysm in the 1970s with what became known as the “articulation of modes of production” debates (*cf.* Foster-Carter 1978, Wolpe 1980). These debates reflected the theoretical issue that the aforementioned fundamental questions remained controversial ones, as well as the concrete fact that the historical dissolution of non-capitalist social-productive arrangements under capitalism has proven a much lengthier and more protracted process than envisaged by many earlier Marxists (and perhaps by Marx himself). One of the answers put forth in this context to the question of how the existence of pre-capitalist arrangements alongside capitalism is to be understood was based on the contributions of the French school of ‘new economic anthropology’ – whose key figures include Claude Meillassoux (1960) and Pierre-Phillippe Rey (1971) –, who argued in favour, and explored, the idea that, “far from banishing pre-capitalist forms, [capitalism] not only coexists with them but buttresses them, and even on occasions devilishly conjures them up *ex-nihilo*” (Foster-Carter 1978:51).

All of the above are difficult and profound questions that have caused much debate and which cannot be addressed here in any detail. However, I should make clear what my

own (debatable) views on each of these aspects are, so as to render possible a clearer conceptual and theoretical interpretation of what follows in this thesis. Thus, my view is that the issue of the ultimate causal primacy of social-productive relations vs. productive forces borders on the metaphysical and is, in fact, largely a chicken-and-egg question. Historical materialism provides us with a set of categories, a set of theoretical propositions with respect to the implications of different concrete arrangements and a set of questions with which to interrogate history – and no definitive answer to the aforementioned question (if any is possible) is required in order to draw on historical materialism to analyse and interpret reality.

With regard to the definition and concrete identification of modes of production, my view is that modes of production are conceptual abstractions whose strength and worth resides in their theoretical implications, including specific class structures and ‘laws of motion’. Therefore, it is not useful (indeed, it is erroneous) to seek to identify and impose one single mode of production upon the various concrete social-productive arrangements extant in each concrete social formation, whether based on statistical or functional primacy, for the latter concrete arrangements produce different ‘class’ and ‘development’ implications regardless of any attempt at conceptual homogenisation. Considering that only *concrete* social-productive arrangements exist in actuality, each of which crystallises a certain mode of production with its own implications, then the ‘transition’ from one mode of production to another is, by necessity, not a historical moment, but shorthand for a process of *gradual* substitution of concrete arrangements of one type by concrete arrangements of another. This also answers the specific question on whether or not simple commodity production is a mode of production, for the coincidence of the class places of capital and labour under simple commodity production produces specific consequences in terms of the dynamics of exploitation, the general class structure of society and its dynamics of development – and may therefore be usefully conceptualised as a mode of production in its own right. Finally, the above also answers the last question on how we are to conceptualise the co-existence, within a given social formation, of social-productive arrangements that take a different form from that which crystallises the essence of the mode of production corresponding to the predominant form: modes of production are abstract categories, whereas “the concrete is the concentration of many determinations” (Marx 1973).

While the above are ontological and theoretical questions to which I have hopefully provided my own sufficient answers, the empirical question of how the transition to

capitalism has taken place and continues to take place remains largely unaddressed – and it is worth dwelling upon it for a moment. One thing on which most authors and analyses agree is the central and enabling role played by the *agrarian* transition in the context of the wider transition to capitalism (Wood 2002). This is because the generalisation of capitalist social-productive relations in agriculture produces four consequences that facilitate the dissemination of those relations across other sectors and industries: i) the creation of a mass of dispossessed former ‘peasants’ who become an employable proletariat (i.e. “primitive accumulation”); ii) the creation of a surplus of means of subsistence enabling the viability of capitalist arrangements in other industries (and the increase in what Marx termed *relative* surplus-value, by decreasing the quantity of socially-necessary labour required to ensure the reproduction of hired labourers); iii) the accumulation of agrarian capital susceptible to investment in other industries; and iv) the expansion of the domestic market, given that proletarian households must meet their needs through the market.

The original transition consisted in the “English classical” path from feudalism to capitalism, which was discussed at length by Marx himself (*cf.* Bernstein 2010:27-29). It involved the creation of a dispossessed agrarian proletariat through the commodification of the land (based on such means as the enclosure of the commons); the creation of a new class of tenant capitalist farmers (so-called “yeoman farmers” who employed proletarian labourers) from amongst the most successful former ‘peasant’ farmers; and the conversion of feudal landed property owners into capitalist landed property owners (insofar as land became a commodity susceptible to being bought and sold, or leased out to tenant farmers). However, throughout subsequent history the transition to (agrarian) capitalism in other contexts has taken place along different paths. Thus, following on from Marx’s characterisation of the English classical transition, Lenin (1899) was the first to identify two other ‘paths’: the “Prussian”, or “Junker”, path, involving the transformation of the feudal landed class *itself* into a capitalist landed class reliant on dependent and seasonal wage workers; and the “American path” (of greatest interest in the context of this thesis), which resulted from the *differentiation* of relatively homogeneous and independent smallholders, through subjection to commodity relations (and their associated erratic and unstable consequences), into an agrarian proletariat, on the one hand, and a class of capitalist farmers employing the former, on the other (Post 1995, cit. in Bernstein 2010). Other transitions at later moments in history exhibited different characteristics: by contrast to the ‘English classical’, ‘Junker’ and ‘American’ paths, which took place “from below” (insofar as they involved the internal transformation of the previously-existing agrarian class

structures), the 'Japanese' and 'South Korean' paths took place "from above", insofar as the State played a decisive role by undertaking the dispossession of the peasantry through taxation (Byres 1996; Bernstein 2010). To a greater or lesser extent, each transition is thus historically peculiar, depending on the previously-existing class structure and on the balance of forces between the existing classes in each social formation (as well as on the interactions between the social formation and the rest of the world system – which take on an enhanced role in the context of the transitions taking place, much less autonomously than in the past, in today's world).

The discussion so far hopefully renders clear the extent to which, for any social formation, the key issues of the changes in the class structure, the commodification of the means of production and subsistence, and the development trajectory are all closely linked, coming together under the broader category of social-productive dynamics. This provides an encompassing theoretical lens under which to read some of the trends and debates that have swept across the development literature in recent times, including on "livelihoods diversification" (Ellis 1998), "de-agrarianisation" (Bryceson and Jamal 1997), "de-peasantisation" (Bryceson 2002 and 2002b) or, by contrast to the latter, "re-peasantisation" (van der Ploeg 2010). Although I shall not discuss the latter in any detail here, suffice it to say that I largely endorse Mueller's (2011) assessment that, to the extent that some of these debates have ignored or disregarded the long tradition of theoretical debate on the 'agrarian question' among Marxists, they have also, in most cases, "failed to achieve a sufficient degree of structural understanding or explanation of these trends".

In the meantime, there is a final important question that is worth addressing in this context. All of the above has built on the assumption that the inherent dynamics of the capitalist mode of production are a necessary condition for the development of the productive forces, and that this applies to all industries and sectors. However, a relevant critique and counter-argument to this conception has maintained that agrarian production (by virtue of the specific character of its labour process and the direct dependence on nature that it implies: *cf.* Bernstein 2010) is *less* productive under capitalist social-productive arrangements than when the class places of capital and labour coincide ("peasant production"). This (neo-)populist school of thought has its roots in the work of Alexander Chayanov (1966) and has been taken up by the most disparate of advocates in a variety of contexts (including the World Bank: 2008). Drawing on empirical evidence to the effect that there is an inverse relationship between farm size and productivity (*cf.* Fan and Kan-Chang 2005), this interpretation maintains that the 'domestic mode of production' is

the most productive and effective in agriculture, that the Marxist conclusions regarding the implications of the transition to agrarian capitalism are erroneous and misleading, and that active support to smallholder agricultural production should be given *with a view to maximising productivity and output*.

While this is yet another question that I do not have the space to address in detail here, I shall merely enunciate three reasons why I do not consider this critique to be solid or reasonable enough to invalidate the general theoretical framework adopted in this thesis: (i) the purported ‘inverse relationship’ has been convincingly criticised on various methodological and theoretical grounds (*cf.* Mueller 2011:29); (ii) the consolidation of landholding under capitalism is only a part of the Marxist account, thus even if it holds it does not imply that capitalist social-productive arrangements are less productive, especially in a dynamic perspective; and (iii) the Marxist account does not claim that agrarian social-productive arrangements are everywhere *sufficient* to enable sustained productivity increases, but that they have an in-built tendency to do so and constitute a pre-condition for that to be possible in a generalised and sustained way. However, we should still concede that this theoretical approach has had the merit of drawing greater attention to some specific features of the agrarian labour process, which no doubt are partly to account for the relatively protracted character of the penetration into farming by capital and capitalist social-productive relations, especially in the case of less developed social formations.

### ***3.4 Conclusions and additional considerations***

In this chapter, I have sought to present and discuss the key theoretical currents and debates within the field of economic development theory – in just over twenty pages. Needless to say, this could not have been done without leaving out numerous relevant authors and issues, and without addressing those authors and schools of thought that were included but in a very cursory way – thus failing to do justice to the depth and scope of their theoretical contributions. The aim, however, was not to provide an overview of the main theories of development for its own sake, but to do it in order to account for the theoretical foundations of the research project underlying this thesis. With that in mind, it is hopefully understandable that I have left out many authors, theories and models and skipped a tremendous amount of detail – and instead simply sought to identify the key



features in each main current of thought and to put forth my reasons for adhering to, or rejecting, each theoretical approach.

My conclusion has been that historical materialism constitutes a body of theory that is uniquely able to account for many key aspects that, in my view, competing theories are unable to satisfactorily come to terms with: modern economic growth, inequality patterns at various scales, political dynamics, migration and urbanisation, etc. However, this assessment does not imply adhering to Marx's (or Marxist) theory as dogma, nor endorsing certain less-than-convincing aspects of some Marxist theory – such as, for example, productive-force determinism or the simple and univocal base-superstructure model proposed by vulgar materialism. Historical materialism provides a powerful set of questions, a powerful set of analytical categories, and a powerful set of theoretical insights into the historical development of societies. That is how, in my view, it should be used. Still, if historical materialism is such a powerful toolbox with which to analyse social reality, it is of course reasonable to ask why it is that it has increasingly fallen out of favour in academia – and, in particular, why it is that Marxist political economy has in the last few decades taken on an increasingly peripheral role when it comes to theoretical and empirical work on development and underdevelopment. The view endorsed here is that, despite the validity of several important critiques made with regard to this theoretical framework (on which more below), the chief reasons for this decline have had an 'external' character, largely to do with changes in the ideological and political-economic context. Hence, the first thing that should be noted is that the decline of historical materialism in the analysis of (under)development is part and parcel of a much broader decline of Marxism in (particularly "Western") academia roughly from the 1970s onwards. I shall therefore begin by briefly addressing the causes of this general decline before undertaking a discussion of the substantive critiques.

As suggested above, my view is that the gradual decline of historical-materialist scholarship over the last three or four decades has been, first and foremost, a consequence of ideological and material changes introduced in the context of neoliberalism. However, the impacts of these were arguably facilitated by the trajectory of Marxist scholarship previously in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, and by the vulnerabilities that that trajectory had given rise to. In very summary terms, this can be explained by reference to Perry Anderson's (1976) discussion of "Western Marxism". This author's key argument is that the general retreat of the revolutionary labour movement in Western Europe throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, alongside the stifling dominance of 'official Stalinist' Marxism over that movement, brought

about a severing of the organic linkages between non-dogmatic Marxist scholarship and actual social struggles – a separation which translated into a relative neglect of political economy and its replacement with a focus on culture, ideology and discourse (along with, in many cases, a preference for political quietism).

Lacking such organic linkages and having distanced itself from its original core concerns and analytical foundations, academic Marxism found itself in an especially vulnerable position to face the political and ideological onslaught that was brought on in the context of the ascendancy of neoliberalism. The shift in the balance of power (in favour of capital and to the detriment of labour) that ‘resolved’ the crisis of accumulation of the late 1960s and 1970s in the advanced capitalist economies had wide-ranging ideological and material consequences (on which cf. Harvey, 2005, and the edited volume by Saad-Filho and Johnston, 2004), but of special importance in this context were the rise of postmodernism in the ideological sphere (with its rejection of modernist “meta-narratives”, particularly Marxism, and its embrace of radical subjectivism) and the increasing economic and political pressures placed upon academia (with funding and selection mechanisms increasingly constraining research agendas and intellectual output at the individual, departmental and faculty levels). As Petras (1990:2155) put it:

*The worldwide retreat of the intellectuals [from Marxism] is intimately related to the declining power of the working class movement and the rising power of capital – in the cultural as well as economic sphere. Intellectuals are very sensitive to changes in power. (...) The structural factor is the deep structural integration of intellectuals into the mainstream academic foundation-professional publication networks that serve as the cultural bridge toward established power.*

In sum, then, the decline of Marxist scholarship in the past few decades can be largely put down to the broader ideological and political shift ‘to the right’ in the context of neoliberalism, facilitated by Marxism’s own prior retreat into academia (as opposed to wider social and political rootedness), and by the increasing subjection of academia itself to market compulsions and mechanisms of political and ideological control. In such a general context, one should not be surprised that historical-materialist analyses of development and underdevelopment – indeed, as of other social phenomena – should have been increasingly relegated to the academic and intellectual fringes, regardless (or perhaps partly

because of) their intrinsic merits<sup>14</sup>. The above, however, does not amount to arguing that valid 'substantive' criticisms have not been levied against historical materialism in general, or its account of development and underdevelopment in particular. *They have* – and whether they play a greater or lesser role when it comes to accounting for the decline of this theoretical perspective, they need to be taken into account. Previously in this chapter, we have already referred to some less-than-convincing aspects of this theoretical framework, or at least of some of its variants. For the sake of reflexivity, however, it is important to address these weaknesses in a more systematic way. As a first step in this direction, we can begin by drawing on Runciman's (2007) enumeration of three typical deficiencies of Marxist analyses: their teleological character; their neglect of culture; and their failure to come to grips with the enduring success of capitalism.

With respect to the first of these, there is little doubt that there has been a pervasive tendency towards teleology (i.e. a mode of explanation whereby final causes are deemed to account for processes) in much Marxist literature. Examples of this with direct bearing on this thesis would include explaining away labour migration or the persistence of non-capitalist social-productive arrangements by simple reference to the fact that they are *in the interests of capital*. As I have already suggested whenever theoretical propositions of this sort came up previously in this thesis, this mode of explanation is deeply problematic unless the concrete mechanisms are specified through which the 'final cause' is attained. Social systems do not act intentionally – only human actors inside them do (Callinicos 2004:91). Engaging with historical materialism in a serious and non-dogmatic way thus requires that we steer clear not only of economic determinism, but also of any form of teleological reasoning.

Another frequent and important accusation levied against many Marxist analyses focuses on their neglect of culture as an important factor in social and historical explanation. This criticism relates to the former, given that implicitly regarding human beings as automata governed by teleological structural mechanisms entails disregarding the autonomy and influence of both consciousness and culture (i.e. practices, meanings and representations). Culture, in this anthropological sense, has a 'relative autonomy' of its own

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<sup>14</sup> This does not mean, however, that much theoretical and empirical work from a historical-materialist perspective has not continued to be undertaken and published. As an illustration, cf. Bernstein and Byres' (2001) extensive and impressive review of work along these lines published between 1973 and 2000 in the *Journal of Peasant Studies* *alone* (consequently, solely on *agrarian* political economy). Thus, the argument here is not that Marxist scholarship and historical materialism have been eradicated as a consequence of neoliberalism, but rather that they have become increasingly marginal(ised) in the social sciences.

and evolves in accordance with complex processes that involve emergent properties – not according to a simple and univocal base-superstructure correspondence. Moreover, both (individual) consciousness and (social) culture introduce variability and contingency to social processes, thereby co-determining them and infusing them with indeterminacy. Serious historical-materialist analyses should therefore acknowledge, and enquire into, the role of cultural factors in terms of how they modify the effects of, and feed back upon, the political-economic structures that constitute the ‘core’ focus of the theoretical and empirical exercises..

The third weakness highlighted by Runciman – the failure of the prediction of the imminent overthrow of capitalism to materialise – is arguably the least relevant of these three. This theoretical postulate, which hinged on the tendency towards the increasing socialisation of the labour process under the increasing concentration and centralisation of capital, doubtless played a very important political role in Marx’s thought, as well as in the subsequent strategies of the revolutionary labour movement. In a theoretical sense, however, the postulate itself is relatively marginal to the fundamental core of the theory – and the failure of this particular prediction to materialise within a given time-frame does not invalidate the general tendencies identified therein, let alone the theoretical approach in a more general way.

In addition to the three key vulnerabilities identified by Runciman, another crucial weakness of much historical-materialist analysis that must be highlighted here consists of what Banaji (2010), in an eponymous book, refers to as substituting “theory for history” – that is to say, reducing the investigation of the concrete to a “programme of verifying ‘laws’ already implicit (...) in the materialist conception of history” (id *ibid*:47). A corollary to this, in the context of development and underdevelopment, consists of using mode-of-production analysis as a “structural grid along which history moves in a logical progression” (Munck 1980, *in* Chilcote 1983). In my view as well as of others, this constitutes a formalist and deleterious adulteration of the historical-materialist approach that, once again, falls prey to economic determinism and teleological reasoning. Indeed, probably the single most important ‘internal’ critique and point of theoretical controversy within the historical-materialist analysis of (under)development in recent decades consists of the rejection of the reified and teleological view of modes of production, and its replacement with a more nuanced and indeterminate view that takes account of the variability and historical contingency of social-productive relations and their dynamics (*cf.* Kitching 1980:4-5) – a

debate in the context of which I hope to have made my own positions sufficiently clear (*cf. supra*, pp. 66-68).

In bringing this discussion to a close, it is worth stressing again that all of the above are important and generally valid criticisms against much historical-materialist analysis. However, it is my contention that they do not fundamentally challenge the validity of this theoretical framework, provided that a number of key provisos are taken into account. These provisos, which should qualify any serious attempt to develop and apply the historical-materialist approach, consist of: i) rejecting determinism, teleological reasoning and the univocal base-superstructure correspondence; ii) acknowledging that while class struggle is a constant feature and fundamental driver of history, *other* struggles and factors influence how history moves forward as well; and iii) understanding the concrete as the site of many determinations, therefore requiring careful analysis as opposed to merely serving to validate *a priori* theoretical postulates.

In the empirical component of this research project (Part II of this thesis), the adoption of this theoretical framework entails seeking to identify the predominant types of social-productive arrangements in Guinea-Bissau and their associated class structure in the recent past and present; the dynamics of the transition to commodity and capitalist relations; and the stimuli and obstacles to that transition. This will be done, it is hoped, with the aforementioned caveats in mind.

## 4. Migration-development linkages

This chapter surveys the theoretical literature on the impacts of migration upon the economic development of the areas and countries of origin of the migrants, or the so-called “migration-development nexus” (Nyberg-Sorensen 2002). That important linkages exist is more or less apparent and unanimous, and it also seems relatively uncontentious that they can be subsumed under a relatively small number of ‘channels’ around which the literature on this topic is organised: the effect upon the domestic labour supply; remittances; other transnational impacts of the diaspora; and return migration. Whether out-migration ultimately hinders or fosters the process of economic development, however, is a question that has caused much greater debate, and to which there are much less obvious answers.

As highlighted in the literature, disagreement on these issues has in fact tended to bring about the polarisation of this field into two opposed camps – “migration optimists and pessimists”, as in de Haas’ (2008:23) formulation. In my view, this is mostly due to three reasons. First, the fact that this is a topic that is filled with political implications and which, as a consequence, is especially prone to the analytical being overridden by the normative. Second, the fact that some of the literature has often overemphasised specific linkages to the detriment of others, and drawn conclusions on the overall ‘nexus’ based on such partial considerations (remittances and the ‘brain drain’ being special cases in point). And third, the fact that, at the theoretical level, and twenty years after Papademetriou and Martin (1991) edited a book with precisely that title, this remains, theoretically speaking, an “unsettled relationship”.

In its turn, the theoretically “unsettled” character of this relationship is in my view largely due to a lack of clarity and agreement with regard to the ‘dependent’ pole in this causal relationship: if, as we have seen in the previous chapter, there is such radical disagreement as to what brings about development and even as to what constitutes it, one can hardly expect there to be clarity and agreement as to how a particular factor or process impinges upon it. By and large, the migration-development literature has tended not to acknowledge this weakness and to address the problem in a rather superficial way, taking little care to render explicit what the underlying theoretical understanding of development is in each case and, more often than not, drawing on “development” as a fluid and broad

signifier. As a consequence, there are few consistent contributions to be found that seek to systematically assess the impact of migration upon the process of economic development in accordance with a given theoretical framework. Instead, the bulk of the theoretical production within this field has consisted of more partial, albeit interesting and relevant, theoretical propositions with respect to the various ‘channels’ mentioned above (labour supply, remittances, etc.).

Against this background, this chapter is divided into two sections: first, section 4.1 reviews the main ‘partial’ theoretical contributions and debates with respect to each of the channels through which migration has been deemed to produce socioeconomic effects. After that, section 4.2 briefly addresses the theoretical literature on the place of migration within the historical-materialist account of development. In both cases, this is undertaken with a view to accounting for the theoretical foundations of this research project and identifying their implications for the empirical investigation.

#### ***4.1 Theoretical contributions on specific linkages***

##### ***4.1.1 Out-migration and domestic labour supply***

The discussion of the impacts of outmigration begins with the consideration that the latter causes a reduction in the total resident population of the areas of origin, and also tends to bring about a reduction in their labour supply. From a theoretical perspective, however, it has been argued that that the latter is not necessarily the case, not only because some of the people who migrate were not originally a part of the labour force (whether employed or unemployed), but also because the possible wage increases brought about as a consequence of the initial reduction in the labour supply may induce some of the economically inactive to enter the labour force (and some of those already at work to increase the number of hours they work) (Lucas 2005).

The latter are, of course, formalist (and typically neoclassical) arguments, as are those typically used to analyse how deleterious the reduction in the labour supply turns out to be if and when it does occur. Most commonly, the latter is theoretically depicted as depending on the scarcity of labour as a production factor in the areas of origin (i.e. what its ‘marginal productivity’ is). Under the assumption of homogeneous and “unlimited” labour (as in Lewis’ 1954 model), outmigration is presumed not to have any effect upon

domestic production: it merely increases the capital-labour ratio, reduces unemployment and increases income *per capita* (cf. Massey *et al* 1998, Abreu 2009). Once the assumptions of homogeneous and unlimited labour are relaxed, however, these conclusions cease to apply. Under homogeneous labour but positive marginal productivity of labour, aggregate output and income are postulated to decrease as a result of emigration even though output and income *per capita* increase, while distributive effects occur to the benefit of the workers (wages increase) and to the detriment of the holders of capital (the returns to capital are reduced) (Massey *et al* 1998). Then, once the elementary consideration that labour is not a homogeneous 'production factor' is in its turn taken into account, the analysis becomes at once less straightforward, less formalist and more realistic. As highlighted by Lucas (2005), the strategic role played in the production process by some types of workers, the existence of regional bottlenecks in terms of labour availability and the possibility of seasonal labour shortages all mean that even otherwise plentiful labour may in some cases be scarce – and that, in those cases, labour emigration does not have the 'zero opportunity cost' assumed in models based on unlimited labour supplies. Much more complex impacts upon production and productivity may therefore occur as a result of outmigration, depending on the geographical and skills' profiles of the migrants, as well as on the relative scarcity of those skills in the context of the areas from which they migrate (Lucas 2005).

As might be expected, the specific category that has been the object of greatest attention in this context is that of 'highly-skilled' workers (i.e. the "brain drain", arbitrarily but typically operationalised as corresponding to the emigration of those with tertiary education: *e.g.* Docquier and Rapoport 2004). This focus is accounted for by reference to the assumed importance of the latter in the process of development, their relative scarcity in the context of developing countries and the fact that, due to the selectivity and self-selectivity of migration, skilled migrants tend to be over-represented among the migrant population (Chiswick 2000). A vast 'pessimistic' literature on the impact of migration upon development has thus flourished around this particular issue above all others, featuring such notable contributions as Bhagwati's writings on this subject, which included the suggested levying of a migration tax by the countries of origin in order to create a disincentive to emigration (*e.g.* Bhagwati 1976). Additionally, insofar as the 'brain drain' has been found to disproportionately affect some key sectors, particularly health, skilled migration has also been posited to indirectly affect the 'quality' of the labour force, thereby further constraining economic performance (Bhargava and Docquier 2008).



After dominating the literature for decades, during the course of which it had a profound impact on both academia and the policy-making world, this pessimistic view of the 'brain drain' was eventually challenged by the so-called "optimal brain drain" literature, put forth most prominently by one of the figureheads of the NELM, Oded Stark (2002 and 2005). The key arguments put forth by Stark and other proponents of this view are the following: i) the *possibility* of migration increases the expected returns to education, thus creating an incentive to the acquisition of knowledge and skills in the areas of origin; ii) for various reasons including immigration restrictions, a significant proportion of those who thus acquire additional knowledge and skills end up remaining in their original areas; and iii) for that reason, the areas in question may end up with higher average educational levels and/or a greater pool of skills than would have been the case in the absence of emigration (Stark 2002 and 2005). This "revisionist" approach to the 'brain drain' was met with some (limited) success, but it has also been challenged theoretically in its turn – among others by Schiff (2005), who argued not only that such a combination of incentive structures and actual outcomes is difficult to come by in practice, but also that the "optimal brain drain" argument fails to take into account the additional public and private expenditures incurred in education as a result.

Thus, we find that the main dividing lines in the theoretical debates around the topic of the impact of outmigration upon the labour supply have largely consisted of: i) the issues of the scarcity and heterogeneity of labour; ii) the possibility of compensating effects occurring in response to the initial impacts upon the labour supply; and iii) the effects of the possibility of migration upon the structure of incentives to skills' acquisition.

#### *4.1.2 Remittances*

The impact of remittances has played a similar role among "migration enthusiasts" to that played by the 'brain drain' among "migration pessimists". This has been especially the case as a result of the massive increase in (and greater formality and visibility of) worldwide remittance flows from the 1990s onwards, but it also reflects the fact that migrant remittances account for a large share of GDP in many developing countries, and that they often exhibit counter-cyclical properties (with migrants sending more when their relatives are most in need) (Carling 2005).

Although most of the enthusiasm around remittances lacks clearly-specified theoretical underpinnings, it has tended to gravitate around two main axes: the effect of

remittances in bringing about poverty reduction, hence a direct improvement in social welfare (Acosta *et al* 2007); and their effect upon investment, serving to alleviate the main constraint to economic development most commonly assumed to characterise underdeveloped regions and countries in general (Bjuggren *et al* 2010). With such potentially virtuous implications, and as they experienced a massive increase in volume and visibility worldwide, it is of little wonder that remittances should have become, as *per* Kapur's (2004) fortunate and oft-quoted expression, a "new development mantra".

A major weakness of the 'optimistic' literature, however, has been the tendency to automatically equate the transfer of private income and wealth with the transfer of capital – which is of course a result of the lack of a theoretically robust concept of capital in the first place. While few non-Marxists have gone as far as criticising the essentialist understanding of capital implicit in this confusion and replacing it with a relational one, many migration scholars have undertaken a similar (if less robust) critique by highlighting that private remittances tend to be used for consumption rather than investment – a consideration which spurred a wave of remittance-use micro-studies (Russell 1992). This latter approach has in its turn been criticised for restricting its attention to the spending behaviour of the immediate recipients (first-round spenders) of remittances, thus neglecting the indirect effect upon investment brought on either as of the subsequent rounds of the multiplier or through mediation by the banking sector; as well as for failing to appreciate the fungible character of remittances vis-à-vis other sources of household income (*cf.* Massey *et al* 1998, Abreu 2009). Nevertheless, it has usefully contributed to highlighting the inadequacy of simplistically regarding remittances as 'capital'. The other main line of argument taken up by the 'revisionist' take on remittances has consisted in the idea that the latter breed distortion and dependency: the theoretical argument is that remittances create a disincentive to work amongst recipient households, possibly locking those households in a situation of permanent dependence upon exogenous resources. Thus, especially when migration is sufficiently widespread, remittances themselves are deemed to have a negative effect upon the labour supply, compounding the direct one brought on by outmigration (Chami *et al* 2003, Ellerman 2003).

In the meantime, while playing a less central a role in the debates, other potential impacts of remittances have been theoretically postulated and empirically explored in the literature. These have included the potential of remittances to bring about 'Dutch disease', i.e. an appreciation of the country's currency compromising its export competitiveness (e.g. Acosta *et al* 2007b); the effect of remittances in strengthening the domestic financial sector,

by providing liquidity to the latter and constituting a stimulus to branch expansion (e.g. Gupta *et al* 2009); the potential inflation-inducing effect of remittances (e.g. Ball *et al* 2010); and the impact of remittances upon inequality, under the hypothesis that remittances may exacerbate inequality at the village, regional and/or national levels, given that migrants (especially international ones) are not homogeneously drawn from the population and rarely if ever consist of the poorest (e.g. Docquier *et al* 2003).

We thus find that, similarly to the case of the effect of migration upon the labour supply, the literature on remittances is largely characterised by isolated emphases on each of the various macroeconomic effects that they bring about, with a ‘standard’ (in this case optimistic) approach being subject to theoretical challenge by a range of ‘revisionist’ (in this case pessimistic) takes.

#### *4.1.3 Other transnational impacts of the diaspora*

The increasing attention and emphasis on remittances has been part of a broader shift from regarding migration as a fairly permanent process involving the severing of the ties that link the migrants with their areas of origin to a transnational approach that instead emphasises dual identities and belongings, as well as actions and practices that straddle different areas and countries (Levitt and Nyberg-Sorensen 2004). Money remittances constitute the most visible and economically relevant form of migrant transnationalism, but migration scholars and researchers have also highlighted other forms of transnationalism undertaken “from below” as a ‘by-product’ of migration that have a potential impact upon economic development (Guarnizo and Smith 1998). Most significantly, these have included transfers of technology and know-how, most notably in the case of so-called diaspora knowledge networks (Mayer and Wattiaux 2006); the role of diaspora business networks in fostering foreign investment and business partnerships (Newland and Patrick 2004); and the specific development-inducing effects of the projects and activities undertaken by migrant hometown associations (HTAs) (Mercer *et al* 2008)<sup>15</sup>.

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<sup>15</sup> To these, one might also add the more loosely-defined “social remittances” that consist of the cultural effect exerted by migrants upon the values, beliefs and attitudes of their households and communities of origin (Levitt 1998); or the vast literature on transnational political activities of diasporas (*cf.* Ostergaard-Nielsen 2003, Mercer *et al* 2008). Given the less direct relationship between these processes and practices and the process of economic development, however, I shall not address them here beyond this brief mention.

Along with remittances, the transfer of knowledge and know-how, albeit defined in vague and hopeful terms, has long been one of the main arguments of migration “optimists”. Because this transfer usually takes on forms that are intangible and difficult to operationalise, however, the literature has rarely gone beyond enunciating this potential in general terms. The exception to this possibly consists of the focus on the networks of highly-skilled elements of the diaspora who have increasingly come together in order to actively engage in the sharing of know-how and experiences, and to devise ways of contributing to the scientific and economic development of their countries of origin (Mayer and Wattiaux 2006). The emergence of these practices facilitated the shift from a “traditional emphasis on embedded knowledge of potential returnees in a human capital approach (return option) to a connectionist approach where social capital, including technical and institutional links, is crucial” (id *ibid*:5). This is hardly the place to undertake a critique of the reliance on the concepts of human and social capital (on which see Fine 2000), so I shall merely highlight the fact that this passage renders clear the theoretical proposition (or hope) that skilled emigrants, both individually and especially in the context of structured networks, actively undertake the transfer of knowledge to their countries of origin and contribute to skills’ acquisition by their compatriots there. They thus constitute a ‘scientific counterpart’ to diaspora business networks, which have also attracted increasing attention by virtue of their capacity to function as chambers of commerce, disseminating knowledge about business and investment opportunities in the countries of origin, facilitating business partnerships and, consequently, attracting foreign direct investment into the country (Newland and Patrick 2004). A similar but certainly more ‘grassroots’ form of migrant network transnationalism is that of hometown associations, which consist of translocal networks bringing together migrants originating in the same community and local members of that community in order to undertake collective initiatives aimed at improving the welfare of the local residents in various ways (Orozco and Welle 2004, Mercer *et al* 2008). While being often beset by specific difficulties (limited fundraising capacity, difficulties and conflicts regarding the setting of priorities, etc.), these have been argued (and shown) to play an important complementary role vis-à-vis both the provision of public services and the transfer of remittances at the individual and household level, their most successful endeavours typically consisting in the financing and provision of community-level public goods (Mercer *et al* 2008).

#### 4.1.4 Return migration

The last main category of development impacts addressed in the “migration-development” literature consists of those which are associated with the migrants’ return to their areas of origin. To a large extent, the effects of these are deemed symmetrical with respect to the original outmigration – adding to the labour supply to a varying extent and with varying consequences, depending, among other things, on the age and skills profile of the return migrants. The literature on the economic consequences of return migration has thus typically sought either to empirically identify the specific characteristics of return migration in terms of (self-)selectivity, or to put forth typologies and *a priori* assertions with regard to those characteristics (Cesare 1974, Cassarino 2004). This has occasionally been complemented by the ‘optimistic’ consideration that many return migrants bring along their savings and know-how (which may be used to start businesses); but also by two ‘pessimistic’ caveats: that many migrants return to their countries with a view to retiring; and that the skills and know-how that they have acquired abroad are often location-specific and/or associated with specific production processes, and therefore cannot be put to productive use in a different context from that in which they were acquired (O’Conner and Farsakh 1996).

As made apparent in this section, many specific linkages between migration and “development” have been theoretically posited (and empirically investigated) in the literature. Without having sought to be thorough, and having focused solely on the effects that have a more strictly ‘economic’ character, we have seen that migration has been theoretically postulated:

- i) through the initial outmigration, to bring about a decrease in the labour supply (or not), reduce the average skills level of the labour force (or not), decrease total output and income (or not), increase income and output *per capita*, reduce unemployment, affect the functional distribution of income, and bring about a deterioration in health and education (hence the ‘quality’ of the labour force);
- ii) through remittances, to reduce poverty, increase investment, increase output, increase inequality, reduce the labour supply, generate dependence, develop the financial sector, compromise export competitiveness and bring about inflation;

iii) through other transnational practices of migrant diasporas, to promote the transfer of skills and knowledge, foster business partnerships and foreign direct investment, and enhance the translocal provision of public goods; and

iv) through return migration, to increase the labour supply (or not) and increase the skills' levels of the labour force (or not).

Whether or not each of these effects occurs both in general and in specific concrete contexts is a matter for empirical investigation, which has indeed been undertaken in multiple contexts. What this myriad of potential channels renders clear, however, is that it is virtually impossible to settle the "unsettled" migration-development nexus by recourse to deductive methods. Quite simply, the variety, complexity and context-specificity of these channels make it impossible to deduce ultimate consequences from assumptions regarding the intermediate causal linkages. Additionally, I would argue, it is both sterile and misleading to assess each facet of the problem in isolation, without viewing "phenomena, places and problems in terms of their interconnections and relations within a social totality" (Bedford 1981:219). The alternative, of course, consists of case-by-case analyses based on a clear theoretical understanding of what constitutes development as a process, what drives it, and what role migration can be expected to play in that context. Given that, as explained in Chapter 3 (above), the historical materialist conception of development is the one adopted in the context of this thesis, the next section briefly reviews some of the contributions to addressing the migration-development nexus from this theoretical perspective.

#### ***4.2 The migration-development nexus in the historical materialist conception of development***

In the context of historical materialism, labour migration is understood as an integral component of capitalist development. The capitalist mode of production implies the replacement of extra-economic coercion as the basis for the mobilisation of labour with the "dull compulsion of economic relations" (Marx and Engels 1969[1848]:2). Given that, in its turn, the latter is ensured by dispossession and proletarianisation, the geographical mobility of workers is understood as a reflection and dimension of their 'social mobility', in the sense of the workers being 'free' (and compelled) to sell their labour-power to any capitalist. As already mentioned, Marx addressed at length the process of primitive

accumulation whereby this comes about, as well as the possibilities that this gives rise to – and, consequently, metaphorically but clearly identified the role of labour migrants as “the light infantry of capital” (Marx 1982[1867]:728). Drawing on these central propositions of Marxist theory, the general relationship between migration and development in this theoretical framework is therefore clear: (labour) migration *constitutes* development, insofar as it is one of the dimensions of the process of primitive accumulation whereby the transition to capitalism is achieved.

However, in the specific context of social formations in the early or intermediate stages of the transition to capitalism, i.e. where the latter co-exists with other modes of production that maintain a significant presence, it has been abundantly argued by certain strands of Marxist thought (particularly anthropologists like Claude Meillassoux and P.-P. Rey) that the articulation between the capitalist and other modes of production is such that the conservation of the non-capitalist modes is necessary in order to ensure the viability of capitalist development, namely through the provision of labour-power (at first seasonally) and means of subsistence. In the words of Bedford (1981:220):

*“A vitally important component of the articulation of capitalist and pre-capitalist modes in many parts of the Third World [is] therefore, a deliberate reliance on the indigenous village socio-economic system to reproduce cheap labour for capitalist enterprises rather than destroying the pre-capitalist mode (...)”*

If that is the case, then migration patterns (between the “village system” and the *loci* of capitalist production) are “in large measure a function of the articulation of capitalist and pre-capitalist modes” (id *ibid*:220). We thus find an important modification to be superposed upon the basic Marxist schema: (i) the uprooting and dispossession of independent producers turns them into proletarians, many of whom are forced to migrate, and this accounts for mass migration and urbanisation; (ii) however, the transition to capitalism is protracted and, in its early stages, requires the preservation of non-capitalist modes of production, with geographical mobility back and forth between the *loci* of the “village system” and capitalist production as the main mechanism through which this comes about.

I find this interpretation to be convincing, but it is also highly functionalist: the preservation of non-capitalist modes of production is depicted as occurring because it is in the interests of, and a requirement for, capital; presumably, if and when the latter ceases

to be the case, those modes are simply wiped out. That would seem to suggest that the development of the 'labour reserve' areas of largely non-capitalist production is exclusively determined externally, as a function of the development of the social formation as a whole. However, two objections may be raised to the latter interpretation: i) as with any functionalist schema, it is less than convincing unless the specific mechanisms are identified through which the 'final cause' is achieved; and ii) regardless of the function served vis-à-vis the wider totality (social formation or world system), it is unquestionably the case that migration brings about changes to the social organisation of production in the areas of origin of the migrants in a variety of ways, thereby affecting the development trajectory of those areas with relative autonomy. In fact, the latter is precisely the key focus of our interest. So how does it take place?

Arguably the most systematic theoretical contribution on the direct impacts of labour circulation upon social-productive organisation has been that of Guy Standing (1981, 1982, 1984), which constitutes a major theoretical foundation of this research project. In addition to discussing the mobility implications of different modes of labour exploitation and different forms of the transition to capitalism, Standing *also* dissects and discusses the obverse relationship, of greatest interest to us: the implications of mobility and migration for the social organisation of production. This author puts forth seven main channels through which these impacts come about, i.e. seven main ways in which migration accelerates the transition to the capitalist mode of production (Standing 1981:192-201):

- (i) "accelerating the decay of customary labour relations, undermining the legitimacy of peasant obligations and allowing landlords to withdraw from custom-bound obligations", i.e. undermining the implicit non-capitalist social contracts;
- (ii) "contributing to rural class differentiation", most notably through remittances;
- (iii) "stimulating rural wage employment", since rural labour employers become both more able and more constrained to rely on hired labour as opposed to other forms of labour mobilisation;
- (iv) "increasing the social division of labour", because the greater availability of migrant labourers facilitates the extensification of production as well as



technological change, compared to the alternative of sole reliance on 'autochthonous' labour;

- (v) "concentrating workers with similar skills, thus allowing the development of the detailed division of labour", which in practice takes place through the process of urbanisation and the complex division of labour rendered possible by the concentration of numerous workers;
- (vi) "stimulating the 'taste' for commodities produced by capitalist industry and homogenising social tastes", thus expanding the domestic market; and
- (vii) "constituting a labour reserve", which amounts to the 'classical' and most commonly mentioned function of migration in the context of the transition to capitalism (as discussed in the context of Chapter 2).

The reader will perhaps notice that only some of these impacts, or functions, directly concern the areas from which the migrants originate (namely functions i, ii, iii, iv and, to a certain extent, v). Nevertheless, those ones provide the missing component enabling the micro-level assessment of the impact of migration upon the social organisation of production, particularly in rural areas, that we shall be mobilising in the context of the case-study of Guinea-Bissau in the following chapters. They also make it possible to bridge the macro-micro divide in this particular field of application of historical materialist theory, by linking, through specific theoretical propositions, such broader theoretical discussions like Marx's on primitive accumulation, Lenin's on class differentiation and the new economic anthropologists' on migration in the context of the articulation of different modes of production.

With this in mind, and as a direct consequence of the theoretical framework adopted in this research project, in Part II of this thesis I shall *not* be concerned with seeking to assess or estimate most of the 'migration-development' linkages identified in Section 4.1. Building on the theoretical consideration that the structure and dynamics of social-productive relations, especially but not exclusively in the agrarian space, constitute the key determinants of the economic development of Guinea-Bissau, I shall be drawing on macro- and micro-level evidence to examine the role played by migration in the conservation and/or dissolution of non-capitalist productive arrangements, and on the transition to capitalism more generally. The major focus will therefore be on the

contribution of migration, and its second-order consequences, to the processes of class differentiation, dissolution of customary labour relations, generalisation of wage labour and modernisation of production.

## Theoretical foundations: a recapitulation

In the first part of this thesis, I have sought to present introductory overviews of the key theoretical debates in three topics that are of central interest in the context of this research project: migration, development and the migration-development nexus. In each of the three chapters that make up this first part, the presentation followed a similar format: a summary presentation of the main competing theoretical perspectives, followed by an explanation of my own options in terms of adhering to, or rejecting, each of those perspectives.

The unifying thread linking these theoretical choices, in all three topics, consists of my endorsement of a materialist, historical and structural perspective. In other words, I have implicitly argued that the most appropriate way for enquiring into *any* social process is one that:

- i) seeks to identify the ‘deeper’ *structural* causes of that process (as opposed to focusing on the epiphenomenal issue of individual choice);
- ii) draws on the consideration that, to a very significant extent, these deep structural causes consist of, or result from, the dynamics of *material* reproduction of societies; and
- iii) regards the *historical* method (in other words, the analysis of historically- and geographically-concrete data) as the necessary entrypoint for both idiographic analysis and nomothetic generalisation.

At the same time, however, I have cautioned on several occasions against the teleological overdetermination of the concrete by abstract theory – a common flaw in structuralist approaches. The concrete, being complex and largely indeterminate, should not be used selectively as a mirror in which to reflect *a priori* theory, but as the *locus* for assessing the variability and contingency of abstract categories and theoretical insights, making it possible to revise and improve those categories and insights.

Thus it was that the theoretical chapter on the determinants of migration concluded with a call for a renewed historical-structural synthesis that asserts the primacy

of political-economic factors (namely, the uneven development of capitalism) in accounting for both the 'production' of migratory populations and the geographical patterns exhibited by migration flows; but which, at the same time, also acknowledges the interplay of numerous other factors (including culture, history, politics and the inertia of migration systems and networks) in bringing about concrete outcomes.

In the subsequent chapter, the overarching conclusion was that enquiring into what is usually referred to under the nebulous term "development" requires investigating the structure and dynamics of social-productive relations. This implies addressing the quantitative process of accumulation, but also the qualitative processes of change in those relations in ways permitting or constraining accumulation. Given the unique character of capitalist production in terms of its dynamics of accumulation, the issue of the *transition* to commodity and capitalist relations (or the lack of such a transition) thus becomes the pivotal point on which hinges the explanation for differential development outcomes – while acknowledging both the need to take external factors into account (for no social formation develops unconstrained) and the meta-theoretical importance of rejecting determinism and teleology.

From this theoretical understanding of development also follows a specific understanding of the migration-development nexus, whereby migration and its second-order consequences (remittances and other transnational practices, return migration, etc.) are deemed to affect development in the migrants' areas of origin to the extent that they facilitate or constrain accumulation – both quantitatively and qualitatively. As a consequence, sole reference to the quantitative (e.g. macroeconomic) impacts of migration provides a very incomplete picture of the latter's development consequences. In addition to those macro-level quantitative impacts, endorsing this theoretical perspective thus entails looking at the various ways in which migration advances (or hinders) commodification and the transition to capitalism at the micro level.

In Part II of this thesis, we shall turn to the case-study of contemporary Guinea-Bissau, and we shall focus on migration, development and the migration-development nexus in the context of this social formation. In accordance with what has been summarised above, this will be done from a historical, structural and materialist perspective, by deploying the analytical categories and theoretical insights that we have been referring to in a non-dogmatic and non-deterministic way in order to gain a better understanding of the phenomena under analysis.

## **PART II – CASE-STUDY: GUINEA-BISSAU**

## 5. Research methods and organisation of work

### 5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents and discusses the research methods employed in this research project, including the concrete ways in which the data collection and analysis was undertaken. This is done with a view to highlighting the strengths and limitations of the data, as well as the extent to which the resulting conclusions may be deemed accurate, reliable and susceptible to extrapolation. Additionally, the rather detailed description and discussion of the methods and of the dilemmas and difficulties encountered during fieldwork is also meant to serve as an aid and reference for researchers doing similar research work on Guinea-Bissau in the future.

This research project adopted a “mixed methods” approach, in that an attempt was made to combine different quantitative and qualitative methods with a view to triangulating the information thus obtained (Gray 2009: 199-216). As described in greater detail below, besides the consultation and analysis of secondary literature and data, these methods included semi-structured interviews with key informants, focus groups and a household survey in two villages of Guinea-Bissau. Regardless of their more qualitative or quantitative character, however, all these methods were ‘nested’ within what was effectively a country-level *case-study*. Indeed, the option to address the dynamics of migration and development in Guinea-Bissau was taken both due to the relevance of these processes in the context of this country in and of itself *and* because these processes serve to illuminate tendencies and counter-tendencies at work in other contexts (id *ibid*: 246-247).

The remainder of this chapter is organised as follows: first, section 5.2 lays out the motives for selecting Guinea-Bissau and the reasons why this may be considered a pertinent and relevant country case-study. Then, section 5.3 provides more detailed information on the various qualitative and quantitative methods that were used in the context of this particular country case-study, their sequencing and the way in which the information thus obtained was combined and triangulated. The final two sections discuss in detail each of the two phases of fieldwork: the first, largely exploratory phase, which relied

primarily on interviews with key informants in Bissau (5.4); and the two village-level case-studies, drawing on a household survey on migration and development and other complementary qualitative methods, undertaken in northern and eastern Guinea-Bissau (5.5).

## **5.2 Why Guinea-Bissau?**

The choice of Guinea-Bissau as the focus of the empirical component of this research project was made due to several reasons having to do with the interest of this country as a case-study and others of a more practical character. With regard to the former, the justification lies primarily in three different aspects: the characteristics of this social formation in terms of its social-productive arrangements; the relevance of its migration dynamics; and the fact that relatively little research has been carried out on these topics in this country.

Thus, as regards the first of these aspects, the *a priori* evidence suggested that this is a social formation that finds itself at a relatively ‘backward’ stage in the transition to the capitalist mode of production – irrespective of whether such a transition is regarded as following a relatively unilinear path or as taking place in accordance with more complex logics subject to greater case-to-case variation (see above, Chapter 3). Although there is little available literature focusing explicitly on social-productive dynamics in this country, the scattered available evidence did suggest a series of interesting features. In particular, it conveyed the picture of a country where as much as 70% of the population lives in rural areas and relies primarily on agriculture for their livelihood<sup>16</sup>, and in which wage relations are relatively concentrated in the urban areas (especially Bissau), while making limited inroads into the primary sector (World Bank 2006:46-49). Based on their 2002 Integrated Light Poverty Assessment, the Office of National Statistics of Guinea-Bissau, in partnership with the World Bank, thus estimated, albeit controversially<sup>17</sup>, that the share of “wage earners” in the labour force corresponded at the time to 13%, with the bulk of the economically active categorised under “self-employed/employers” (Sylla 2002:15).

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<sup>16</sup> Source: WBDI (<http://data.worldbank.org/data-catalog/world-development-indicators>).

<sup>17</sup> The reason why this estimation is arguably liable to criticism consists of the fact that dividing the economically active population into such neatly-defined categories, without making allowance for the ‘straddling’ of different means of livelihood, usually underestimates the significance of wage labour relations by not taking into account the significant share of the population for whom the hiring-out of labour is not the sole or main source of income.

This suggested a situation characterised by the predominance of “unfree” labour in the sense of there being limited separation between the immediate producers and the means of production. However, the literature also provided abundant evidence as to the crucial importance of the population’s reliance upon a specific *cash* crop – cashew nuts –, of which Guinea-Bissau, despite its small size, is one of the world’s largest producers (PNUD 2006; World Bank 2006). Additionally, possibly as much as 85% of the production of this crop is undertaken by smallholders (PNUD 2006: 45). Thus, the *a priori* information also seemed to dismiss the idealistic scenario of a country made up of entirely self-sufficient ‘peasants’ producing for their own consumption. Rather, all of the above suggested that this is a social formation in which commodity production is very significant if not predominant, and in which the importance of the linkages with international markets and the capitalist world system is apparent – but where labour-power, that crucial commodity defining capitalism, is not widely bought and sold. Undertaking further primary research in order to find out whether this was indeed the case and what reasons might account for this seemed a useful and pertinent exercise in itself; but it also provided an opportunity for testing theoretical propositions on the transition(s) to capitalism that might apply to other contexts.

The second aspect had to do with the quantitative and qualitative importance of migration in the context of Guinea-Bissau. In addition to the evidence in the literature as to the historical significance of migration flows both within the country and into neighbouring countries (e.g. Carreira and Meireles 1959, Cardoso 2002), other recent statistical and bibliographical sources provided evidence of significant processes of both rural-to-urban migration and international outmigration in the last few decades. For example, the former process was apparent in the evolution of the share of the urban population<sup>18</sup>, which rose from an estimated 16% around the time of independence to an estimated 30% in 2006. In turn, the significance of international outmigration was illustrated by some of the data contained in the entry on Guinea Bissau in the World Bank’s (2008) Migration and Remittances Factbook: an estimated stock of international emigrants amounting to 7.3% of the population; an emigration rate of the tertiary educated of 29.4%; and officially-recorded inward remittance flows corresponding to 9.2% of GDP in 2006. Guinea-Bissau therefore constituted a case of a country in which, presumably, both internal and international migration concern a large share of the population directly – and all of it, to a lesser or greater extent, indirectly. In accordance with the theoretical framework driving

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<sup>18</sup> Source: WBDI (<http://data.worldbank.org/data-catalog/world-development-indicators>).



this research project, migration of this order of magnitude is expected to be linked in important causal ways with the structural and dynamic features of a country's political economy, and Guinea-Bissau thus seemed a valid and useful context in which to study those linkages.

Moreover, these are topics which have been relatively under-researched in the context of this particular country – which provided the third main reason for considering this a pertinent and interesting case-study. Little research has been undertaken on the political economy of Guinea-Bissau: beyond Amílcar Cabral's seminal writings on political analysis before, during and after the independence struggle (Cabral 1980, 2008) and a few key references published in the late 1980s and early 1990s (including Galli and Jones 1987, Lopes 1987 and Forrest 1992), there has been little subsequent research with an explicitly political-economic character. There *has* been plenty of excellent published research in and on Guinea-Bissau, including, in particular, that which reflects the work undertaken within the ambit of Bissau's Instituto Nacional de Estudos e Pesquisa (INEP), as well as a number of excellent ethnographies, like those undertaken by Gable (1995, 1997, 2000, 2003, 2006) on the Manjaco, and by Temudo on the Southern peninsula of Cubucare (2009, 2009b, *inter alia*). However, the specific issues of class differentiation and social-productive dynamics have in most cases been either altogether absent or played a secondary role.

The same applies to research on migration within and from Guinea-Bissau, given that most of the literature that is available on this topic has focused primarily on the modes and features of their incorporation into the host societies<sup>19</sup>, rather than addressed the issue of the dynamics engendered by migration in Guinea-Bissau. In particular, there is an almost total absence of publications as far as the specific issue of the migration-development nexus in Guinea-Bissau is concerned, the main exceptions consisting of the work by Có (2002, 2004) and Carreiro (2011). This is in stark contrast with the amount of research undertaken in other national contexts – such as, for example, Cape Verde, a country with close historical and geographical linkages with Guinea-Bissau<sup>20</sup>. Contributing to addressing this gap in the literature – which is accounted for, not in the least, by the added practical and logistical difficulties of doing research in a country with considerable infrastructural deficiencies – thus constituted the third reason for the choice of this country as a case-study.

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<sup>19</sup> Examples (some of which originate in either Master's or PhD dissertations) include Machado (1998, 2002 and 2002b), Abranches (2004), Quintino (2004), Godinho (2007) and Martingo (2009).

<sup>20</sup> Cf. the bibliographic references in Carling and Akesson (2009) for an introduction to this literature.

To all of the above added the practical advantages of doing research in a country in which Portuguese is the official language and which maintains important post-colonial linkages with Portugal, the former metropolis. As a native speaker of Portuguese myself, I would thus find it easier both to undertake fieldwork (particularly interviews) in Guinea-Bissau and to have a more solid command of the bibliography that is available in Portuguese.

### ***5.3 Summary of the research methods employed***

The empirical part of this research project comprised three main phases. These took place sequentially, and the information obtained in each phase was used both to prepare the subsequent phases and for the purpose of triangulation with the information that had been previously obtained (Gray 2009: 213). The three phases consisted of:

- a) Preliminary review of the secondary literature and data;
- b) Fieldwork (I): interviews with key informants;
- b) Fieldwork (II): village-level case-studies.

Phase (a) involved the consultation of the secondary literature available through two main types of sources: physical libraries, especially those at the School of Oriental and African Studies (London), the London School of Economics and Political Science (London) and the African Studies Library at the Instituto Superior das Ciências do Trabalho e da Empresa (Lisbon); and electronic repositories. Along with statistical data made available by international organisations like the UN, the World Bank and the IMF, and by the National Statistics Office of Guinea-Bissau, the information thus obtained was used to produce a background chapter on Guinea-Bissau laying out a preliminary overview of the issues and laying the foundations for the second phase of the empirical work: interviews with key informants.

This second, largely exploratory phase took place over a 1½ month-long stay in Bissau (November-December 2009), during the course of which 18 semi-structured interviews (listed in Appendix I) were carried out, additional bibliography was consulted (particularly at the INEP library) and additional statistical data was collected. This

information was triangulated with that which had been previously obtained through secondary sources, and used either to corroborate or qualify the latter, or to identify relevant aspects that had hitherto gone unnoticed. All of this eventually fed into Chapter 6 in this thesis, which discusses the issue of migration and development in Guinea-Bissau at the macro level, by drawing on a range of secondary sources and on information provided by the key informants.

The information collected up until that point was also used as the basis for defining the aims and hypotheses that would drive phase (c) of the empirical work: the village-level case-studies, which were carried out during a second fieldwork trip to Guinea-Bissau in March-June 2010 and which comprised a survey of 108 households and other methods of primary data collection. The first few weeks of this second fieldwork trip were dedicated to the logistical preparation of the survey (in terms of travel and accommodation, selection of the survey sites, recruitment of the assistants/interpreters and fine-tuning the questionnaire)<sup>21</sup>. This phase of the process was somewhat delayed by a military uprising in Bissau on April 1, 2010, which raised security concerns in the subsequent weeks. Once those concerns had subsided, however, the rest of this phase of the fieldwork took place without significant problems or delays. Thus, in addition to the 108 interviews in the villages of Caiomete and Braima Sori that made up the survey proper, two focus groups (one in each village) and a further five semi-structured interviews (three in Caiomete, two in Braima Sori), in addition to numerous informal conversations, were conducted with a view to collecting additional qualitative information.

The quantitative data were then digitised and analysed using MS-Excel and SPSS, and the resulting conclusions, framed and complemented by the qualitative information, are presented in Chapters 7 and 8, below. Given that the households were randomly drawn from a sample frame comprising all the households in these two villages, its results are expected to constitute accurate representations of the features and dynamics in each of them. However, as discussed in Chapter 9 of this thesis, it is my contention that some of those conclusions may be tentatively extrapolated to a broader context. Chapter 9 therefore reflects the final triangulation exercise in this research project, whereby the information collected using all the aforementioned primary and secondary data-collection methods is mobilised to put forth (descriptive and explanatory) conclusions regarding the key research questions driving this research, under the light of the theoretical debates

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<sup>21</sup> See below, section 5.5.

presented in Part I. These overarching questions were as follows (see also Section 5.5.2 for a detailed breakdown of the research questions in the context of the village-level case-studies):

- a) What are the main qualitative and quantitative features of the various migration flows within and from Guinea-Bissau in the recent past and present?
- b) What structural factors and processes have accounted for these migration flows?
- c) What have their second-order associated effects been (in terms of remittances, return migration and other transnational practices of the diaspora)?
- d) What are the main livelihood strategies and social-productive arrangements among the population of Guinea-Bissau, and particularly in its rural areas?
- e) To what extent has the commodification of subsistence, land tenure and labour allocation proceeded in Guinea-Bissau?
- f) Which perceivable changes has there been to d) and e) and which factors are to account for that?
- g) How, and to what extent, has migration seemingly affected the dynamics of d) and e)?

The next sections describe in detail the methods adopted in order to acquire information that would make it possible to provide answers to these questions.

#### ***5.4 Fieldwork (I): Exploratory Phase***

The goal of the first fieldtrip to Guinea-Bissau consisted of collecting as much information as possible that would corroborate or contradict that which had been previously acquired, as well as make it possible to identify relevant aspects that had previously gone unnoticed. This involved making several visits to INEP (the main centre of social science research in Guinea-Bissau) in order to use its library and establish contact with the researchers there, reading the weekly newspapers and engaging in informal street interviews. However, the main systematic procedure consisted of a series of semi-structured interviews with privileged informants, mainly drawn from four sectors: public agencies dealing with

migration, economic or statistical matters; banks and money transfer operators; academic and NGO sources specialising in migration and/or development; and the local offices of multilateral organisations. The list of the individuals that were interviewed, the capacity under which they were interviewed and the dates in which the interviews took place are listed in Appendix I of this thesis.

The interviews were semi-structured in the sense that a list of ten to 15 questions were prepared prior to each interview in order to introduce each new sub-topic, but allowance was made for taking the time to probe each relevant new piece of information that was provided by the informant (Gray 2009: 373). The interviews took between one and four hours, depending on the interviewees' availability and the relevance of the information provided. In each case, the informants were informed in advance of the identity of the researcher, the aims of the research project, the purpose of the interview and the conditions under which the information thus obtained would be used. A deliberate option was made not to record the interviews: I had been previously advised by some of my local contacts that, due to the level of political instability in the country, some people (especially politicians) are wary of being recorded and generally adopt a defensive attitude whenever that is the case, which I felt would compromise the relevance of the information provided. I therefore decided instead to use a notebook and to transfer the notes onto my computer within the subsequent 24 hours.

Overall, the interviews were especially useful in terms of providing qualitative macro-level information with respect to the main historical features and current trends of the phenomena under study – particularly migration, remittances and return; poverty and human development; agrarian change; investment and credit provision; labour relations; and foreign trade. Additionally, several of the interviewees were kind enough to provide me with publications and quantitative data not available through other channels. As already explained, all of this information was used both directly – as one of the basis for writing chapter 6 in this thesis (a discussion of migration and development in Guinea-Bissau at the level of the social formation as a whole) – and indirectly – in the context of the preparation of the second phase of the fieldwork.

Crucially, it was from these interviews that emerged the realisation of: i) the central role played by the Fula and Manjaco ethnic groups in the context of present-day international migration from Guinea-Bissau; ii) the seemingly somewhat different logics under which the migration flows from among these two ethnic groups, and their associated

consequences, take place (see below); and iii) the many obstacles with which the transition to productive capitalism, of either an exogenous or endogenous character, is faced in Guinea-Bissau (See Chapter 6). Hence a decision was made to examine in further depth the features and consequences of migration, in its relation to rural social-productive dynamics, through a household survey of two predominantly Fula and Manjaco villages exhibiting significant levels of outmigration.

## ***5.5 Fieldwork (II): Village-level case-studies***

### ***5.5.1 Introduction***

The two village-level case-studies were themselves undertaken based on the triangulation of quantitative and qualitative methods. The latter consisted of semi-structured interviews, informal conversations, focus groups and observation; whereas the former consisted mainly of the household survey on migration and development. The survey comprised a total of 108 interviews and its purpose was both descriptive and analytical. That is to say, the goal was both to identify the features of the phenomena under study as they occur in the survey sites (through the measurement of variables) and to explore the association between those features, namely in terms of causality (through the testing of hypotheses) (Gray 2009: 29).

The case-studies focused on two villages: Caiomete, a predominantly Manjaco village located in the region of Cacheu (northwestern Guinea-Bissau); and Braima Sori, an almost exclusively Fula village located in the Gabu region (in the eastern part of the country) (see Figure 5.1). Their respective total populations are of a comparable order of magnitude (an estimated 1,820 in Caiomete and 1,314 in Braima Sori, based on the results of the survey), although Caiomete is spread out over a considerably larger area.



Figure 5.1 Map of Guinea-Bissau with indication of the location of Caiomete, Braima Sori and Bissau<sup>22</sup>

As explained above, the decision to select two villages that were in some way representative of these two ethnic groups was made following the exploratory interviews, out of which emerged the realisation that, in quantitative and qualitative terms, these are the two ethnic groups whose participation in international migration from Guinea-Bissau is currently most significant<sup>23</sup>. Additionally, a relevant *a priori* difference between the seeming development effects of migration from the two areas also emerged from the interviews that rendered this comparison particularly interesting: several key informants<sup>24</sup> stressed the importance of the associative and collective remittance behaviour of the Manjaco, while in the case of the Fula the emphasis was rather on the integration of migration and remittances into the pre-existing merchant logic that is quite disseminated among this ethnic group.

<sup>22</sup> The location of Caiomete is indicated in red, Braima Sori in blue and the capital, Bissau, in grey. Source: <http://www.mapsorama.com/category/africa-maps/guinea-bissau> (adapted).

<sup>23</sup> Interviews no. 1, 2, 3, 8 and 18.

<sup>24</sup> Interviews no. 1, 3 and 8.

When seen through the lens of the theoretical (historical-materialist) framework framing this research project, this led to the formulation of a central research hypothesis: that migration might be hindering the transition to the capitalist mode of production in the case of the Manjaco, but advancing it amongst the Fula of Guinea-Bissau. This was based on the consideration that the collective remittance behaviour of the Manjaco might be serving to support the livelihoods of the Manjaco 'peasantry' in a more widespread way, through redistribution and spill-over effects, thus actually curbing the processes of expropriation and class differentiation that are deemed a pre-condition for the generalisation of wage labour; whereas the integration of migration and remittances into a merchant capitalist logic (deemed a fore-runner of productive capitalism) among the Fula might actually be serving to advance the process of class differentiation and the transition to productive capitalism in their respective area.

The selection of the specific villages where the survey was to be carried out was then made after compiling an initial list of Manjaco and Fula villages from which international migration was reported to be particularly significant<sup>25</sup>. Out of these, Caiomete and Braima Sori were selected based on a combination of practical/logistical reasons and the fact that they made it possible to undertake a more "contrasting" comparison: Caiomete, which is located about an hour and a half's drive from the region's main city, Canchungo, is much more remote than Braima Sori, which lies on the side of the country's main road, only 15 minutes away from the regional capital (and the country's second largest city), Gabu. Presumably, this would increase the likelihood of such aspects as intra-village class differentiation and the dissemination of wage labour to be more present in Braima Sori than in Caiomete (through "contamination" from the urban areas) – as indeed was also to be expected based on the initial central hypothesis formulated above.

In their turn, the logistical reasons concerned above all the ability to take advantage of a convenient place to lodge in each of the two cases: respectively, the second home of my interpreter and assistant in Caiomete, Mr. Duarte Mendes (see below), who is himself a native of this village; and a hostel in the city of Gabu, located just a 15-minute drive away from Braima Sori (where my lack of previous contacts and the existence of a convenient alternative led me not to request to lodge in the actual village).

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<sup>25</sup> Interviews no. 3 and 8.



### 5.5.2 Aims and hypotheses

The general aims of the village-level case-studies were three-fold:

- a) To collect data on migration from Caiomete and Braima Sori, its characteristics and its second-order associated effects (namely remittances and return migration);
- b) To collect data on livelihoods, agricultural and non-agricultural production activities, and social-productive relations in the two villages; and
- c) To identify possible linkages between a) and b).

With respect to a), specific objectives included characterising migration from the two villages in terms of:

- a.1) quantitative prevalence of migration;
- a.2) basic demographic characteristics of the migrants;
- a.3) socio-professional status and most common occupations of the migrants;
- a.4) most frequent destinations of the flows;
- a.5) significance of return migration;
- a.6) strength of linkages with the households in terms of temporary visits and remittance-sending behaviour;
- a.7) remittance-use patterns by remittance-recipient households; and
- a.8) subjective views of migration as positive or negative by the respondents.

With regard to b), specific objectives included characterising the two villages in terms of:

- b.1) the prevalence of different social-productive arrangements;
- b.2) livelihood strategies and sources of income;

- b.3) land ownership, access to the land and the existence of a market for land;
- b.4) main crops and their respective outputs;
- b.5) the relative importance of production for self-consumption, sale to the market and barter;
- b.6) the prevalence and features of the hiring-in and hiring-out of agricultural and non-agricultural wage labour;
- b.7) ownership of a range of household assets as a proxy for wealth; and
- b.8) the prevalence of the use of animal traction and of agricultural tools beyond the hand-held plough (in the case of Braima Sori: according to information previously acquired, these were not used at all in Caiomete);

Additionally, a question on self-reported literacy was asked with a view to collecting information on this particular aspect.

Finally, the specific aims of the research with regard to c) involved ascertaining:

- c.1) whether past and/or present participation in migration was associated with lesser or greater household wealth, as proxied by asset ownership;
- c.2) whether past and/or present participation in migration was associated with a lesser or larger degree of recourse to the hiring-in and hiring-out of wage labour;
- c.3) whether past and/or present participation in migration was associated with greater reliance on means of production such as animals and agricultural tools (in the case of Braima Sori); and
- c.4) whether past and/or present participation in migration was associated with greater crop outputs.

*A priori* hypotheses were not formulated with respect to all the specific objectives listed above. In some cases, the goal was simply to collect information on each of these aspects, not necessarily to corroborate or invalidate hypotheses. However, in the case of the specific aims listed above under (c), which were to be largely achieved through the

cross-tabulation of evidence corresponding to (a) and (b), hypotheses were indeed formulated prior to carrying out the survey. These included:

- with respect to c.1), that in both villages, participation in migration would indeed be associated with greater household wealth;
- with respect to c.2), that participation in migration would be associated with a larger degree of recourse to the hiring-in of agricultural and non-agricultural wage labour in the case of Braima Sori, though possibly not so in the case of Caiomete (for the reasons explained in 5.5.1, above);
- also with respect to c.2), that participation in migration would be associated with a lesser degree of recourse to the hiring-out of wage labour, given that the assumed positive wealth-increasing effect of migration would reduce the compulsion to do so;
- still with respect to c.2), that the difference in terms of the degree of recourse to the hiring-out of wage labour between migrant and non-migrant households would be lesser in Caiomete than in Braima Sori, given the presumably more collective character of the distribution of the benefits and proceeds from migration among the Manjaco of Caiomete compared to the Fula of Braima Sori;
- with respect to c.3), that participation in migration would indeed be associated with greater use of means of production such as animals and agricultural tools in the case of Braima Sori (bearing in mind that the use of such means of production is reportedly absent among the population of Caiomete); and, finally
- with respect to c.4), that participation in migration would indeed be associated with greater crop outputs.

In sum, the initial set of working hypotheses largely revolved around the idea that migration was expected to lead to beneficial effects in terms of livelihoods and relative wealth in both villages, but that, by virtue of the Fula's long-standing tradition of engagement in merchant capital and the Manjaco's various redistribution mechanisms at

the community level, migration would have a greater effect in terms of class differentiation in the case of Braima Sori and a lesser, negligible or negative one in the case of Caiomete.

### *5.5.3 Logistics and pre-testing*

In addition to coming to a final decision regarding the survey sites and making arrangements with respect to lodging and transportation, the main preparatory task prior to the actual undertaking of the survey in April-May 2010 consisted of recruiting the interpreters/assistants, which was made through the mobilisation of my local network of acquaintances in Bissau. I sought to recruit two assistants/interpreters (to assist me in each of the two survey sites) who were native speakers of the Manjaco and Fula languages (respectively), spoke fluent Portuguese (or English or French, so that they could communicate easily with me) and had at least completed secondary education.

I was quite fortunate in this respect, given that both Messrs. Duarte Mendes and Amadu Djalo, whom I recruited, not only proved highly skilled translators and assistants, but were also able to provide me with their views on many aspects of the history and culture of their respective regions and ethnic groups. Mr. Duarte Mendes is the External Relations Officer in an association called Uno-Tacal, which seeks to document and preserve the cultural heritage of the people of the Cacheu region, as well as promote development projects in that region. A Manjaco himself, he spends half of his time in Bissau and the other half in his home village of Caiomete. In turn, Mr. Amadu Djalo is a member of the Fula ethnic group who hails from a village in eastern Guinea-Bissau about 50 km away from Braima Sori. He attended university education in Dakar and currently lives and works as a French teacher in Bissau<sup>26</sup>.

Once the preparatory logistics had been addressed, the questionnaire was then pre-tested (nine interviews) in late March 2010 in a third site: Bugudjan, a predominantly Manjaco village located at a distance of about 30 km from Caiomete. This led to several changes being made to the questionnaire before settling upon the final version, which was then adopted in Caiomete. The version adopted in Braima Sori was identical to the one used in Caiomete, except for a few differences, which are discussed in section 5.5.4 (see also Appendices II and III).

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<sup>26</sup> See section 5.5.5 (below) for a discussion of issues of positionality in the context of the sources of non-sampling error.

A thorny methodological issue that arose after the pre-testing concerned the operationalisation of the “household” concept (of special importance, of course, given that this consisted of a household survey). In the village selected for pre-testing, Bugudjan, people sharing the same dwelling also shared the same ‘domestic economy’, in the sense of pooling their resources in order to produce a food and cash output that is then used to ensure the physical and social reproduction of the household (under the authority of the patriarch). These would typically consist of very large households (compound, joint or extended families), including e.g. the patriarch and his various wives, non-emancipated male offspring and their wives, non-married female offspring and other adult dependents. In both Caiomete and Braima Sori, by contrast, each residential unit often comprises more than one unit exhibiting relative autonomy in terms of production and consumption. This translates into the existence of more than one *stove* in the kitchen (usually located in the back of each house: see Figure 5.2). The woman (for it is almost inevitably a woman) in charge of cooking in each stove does so using the stock of food that is obtained either directly (grown, fished, hunted or gathered) or indirectly (bartered or bought) through the work undertaken by the people who ‘belong’ to that stove.



**Figure 5.2 A backyard kitchen in Caiomete<sup>27</sup>**

This high degree of ‘inter-stove’ autonomy is not limited to the specific aspect of food (which, it should be noted, accounts for a large share of household consumption): it

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<sup>27</sup> In this case, comprising four stoves that reflect the existence of four separate households within the same housing unit.

reflects a broader economic and financial autonomy, whereby each stove allocates the work of each of its members in the realm of production, as well as the resulting food and cash output in the sphere of consumption - 'inter-stove' transfers, which are common in certain circumstances, notwithstanding, insofar as they are relatively limited compared to the overall household output. This methodological problem was not identified until I arrived in Caiomete and it forced me to rethink my survey methods, as I had envisaged regarding each residential unit as the best proxy for a 'household'. In reality, that was not the case: although the stoves are not fully separated in economic and financial terms, it quickly became apparent that they are indeed the most autonomous resource-allocation units and, accordingly, a decision was made to compile a list of all the 'stoves' in the two villages and use it as the sample frame. This option was subsequently validated both by the qualitative and quantitative data obtained during the course of the interviews and by the information that that had also been the methodological option made in the context of the 2009 national-level Population and Housing Census.

Phase 1 of the survey (Caiomete) lasted for three weeks in total, during the course of which I lodged in the home of my assistant and interpreter, Mr. Duarte Mendes. The first three days were dedicated to listing all the stoves in the village: 366 in total, spread out over 123 dwellings. It is a large village for Bissau-Guinean standards, in terms of both its population and the area through which the houses are scattered. Given the need to balance the representativeness of the survey with the time constraints, a decision was made to interview approximately 1/5 of the "household heads" (72 in total). The problems with the very concept of a "head of household" was in this case circumvented easily by the fact that, as of the initial listing of the households, the people in each house would immediately and without hesitation indicate who the person "in charge" of each particular stove was. The actual sampling was then undertaken using a systematic random sampling ("step") procedure: a number between 1 and 5 was randomly selected and used to indicate the first household in the list to be interviewed. The subsequent primary choices for the interviews corresponded to every 5th household in the list after the first one. The expression "primary choices" is used here because in the case of Caiomete (though not in Braima Sori), even after repeated attempts it was not always possible to interview the people in charge of some households that were part of the sample. There were no instances of refusals to participate in the survey, but on a relatively large number of occasions the people in question could not be found at their homes.

According to the explanations that were usually obtained from relatives or neighbours, this was mostly due either to those people being out on the fields working, to temporary migration to work in agriculture elsewhere in the region or to temporary absences related to ceremonial practices and obligations. The latter play a very central role in the social lives of the Manjaco: during the two and a half weeks that I stayed in Caiomete, funeral celebrations lasting for at least two days in each case were held for at least four people from either Caiomete or the surrounding villages, and this translated into relatively prolonged absences of people from their homes. Whenever it was possible to find out when it was that the person in question would return to his/her home, I tried to accommodate this so as not to skip that household. However, whenever this failed to materialise and after at least three attempts at contact at different times of different days, or whenever I was told that the person would not be returning until after my scheduled period of time in Caiomete, a decision was made to skip that household and move on to the subsequent household in the initial list. The final result was that, out of the 72 interviews that were eventually made, 51 corresponded to 1st choices, 15 to 2nd choices, 5 to 3rd choices and 1 was a 4th choice<sup>28</sup>. The vast majority of the interviews were undertaken in the Portuguese and Manjaco languages, with translation and assistance by Mr. Mendes, although in a couple of cases the interviews were conducted directly in Portuguese given the fact that the respondents were themselves sufficiently proficient in this language.

Upon reaching 50 completed interviews, and given that the logistical arrangements for the second period of fieldwork (in Braima Sori) prevented me from extending my stay in Caiomete, I asked Mr. Mendes to conduct five training interviews on his own (under my supervision), after which he stayed on in Caiomete to conduct the remaining 17 interviews as an enumerator. Given that Mr. Mendes had already actively participated in 50 interviews, which were then followed by five interviews on his own in which I only had to intervene a couple of times, I am quite confident that the recourse to him as an enumerator for the last 17 interviews in Caiomete did not significantly skew the data, nor compromise the reliability of the results<sup>29</sup>.

In addition to the 72 structured interviews that made up the survey proper, three semi-structured interviews were conducted which provided me with qualitative information on the Manjaco, Caiomete, migration from the region and the village, and the

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<sup>28</sup> For a discussion of the possible impact of this in terms of non-sampling error, see section 5.5.5, below.

<sup>29</sup> See also section 5.5.5, below.

village's socioeconomic organisation: two were made with village elders<sup>30</sup>, the other with the president of Uno-Tacal<sup>31</sup>. A three-hour focus group addressing all of these aspects was also conducted with five Portuguese-speaking male residents of Caiomete on one of the last days of my stay<sup>32</sup>. The reasons for this selection, which constituted an obvious source of bias, consisted of the fact that holding a focus group with participants who could not express themselves in the same language as myself would have required constant interruptions for interpretation purposes and broken the flow of the interaction (which is precisely one of the purposes and strengths of focus groups; Gray 2009:233). Thus, the wealth of qualitative data obtained through the focus group, while enabling a better understanding and interpretation of the results of the survey (as incorporated in Chapter 8, below), had to be taken with special caution.

The first period of fieldwork in Caiomete was then followed by a second period in Braima Sori. In this second fieldwork period, I lodged at a hostel in the nearby city of Gabu and travelled to and from the village every day by bush-taxi. I enlisted the help, as assistant and interpreter, of Mr. Amadu Djalo, with whom I spoke in French, namely in the context of those interviews in which it was necessary to translate the questions into the Fula language. As had been the case in Caiomete, however, in a couple of instances I was able to conduct the interviews directly in Portuguese.

In the end, the fieldwork period in Braima Sori lasted for only eight days – significantly less than in Caiomete. This was due to a number of reasons. First, Braima Sori is considerably smaller than Caiomete (although still quite large for Bissau-Guinean standards) in terms of its area, population and number of households. Upon compiling a list of all the households (or stoves, for the logic of household organisation is quite similar here to that in Caiomete, but for the fact that the various women in polygamous marriages in this village all belong to the same – their husband's – household or stove) in the first day of work, a total of 107 households were identified (i.e. less than three times as few as in Caiomete). Second, the actual undertaking of the survey proved much easier than in Caiomete: the respondents could be found at their homes much more easily, which had to do, among other things, with the fact that the Fula dedicate a much lesser portion of their time to ceremonial visits and obligations, as well as to the fact that the cashew harvesting season (March to May) had by then virtually come to an end. A decision was made to

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<sup>30</sup> Messrs. João Catuluca (13 May 2010) and João Mendes (15 May 2010).

<sup>31</sup> Mr. Vitor Caperuto (8 and 12 April, 2010).

<sup>32</sup> This focus group took place on 15 May 2010.



interview around 1/3 of the “household heads” in the village: 36 in total. No-one refused to participate and, in every case, the interviews were made with the ‘primary choice’ household heads in the sample.

As had been the case in Caiomete, the more structured and quantitative interviews that made up the survey proper were complemented by two longer and less structured qualitative interviews (with the village chief<sup>33</sup>, on the one hand, and a former migrant and current head of a local farmers’ association<sup>34</sup>, on the other), in addition to a focus group on migration and the local economy that brought together seven male Portuguese- or French-speaking residents<sup>35</sup>. Again, the selection of the participants in this focus group was made with a view to ensuring that the conduction of the focus group would not require interpreting. While the focus group provided a significant amount of useful qualitative information, I was and remain aware of the bias thus introduced.

#### *5.5.4 The questionnaire*

This section describes the structure and content of the questionnaire as well as the questioning and probing strategies that were employed. The two versions of the questionnaire that were used (in Caiomete and Braima Sori, respectively) are presented in Appendices II and III. The original questionnaires used in the survey were written in Portuguese. In the case of Caiomete, I posed the questions in Portuguese and these were then translated into the Manjaco language by Mr. Mendes, who also translated the answers from Manjaco into Portuguese. In the case of the interviews carried out in Braima Sori, I translated the questions into French myself and conveyed them in that language to Mr. Djalo, who would translate the questions to Fula and the answers to Portuguese. The amount of variability introduced by this process was minimised by the fact that prior to the actual implementation of the survey, I conducted training sessions with Messrs. Mendes and Djalo in which I sought to explain and elucidate any doubts on the object, aim and purpose of all the questions.

The questionnaire was comprised of five sections, which focused respectively on “general household information”, “migration”, “economic activity and production”, “housing characteristics and asset ownership” and “personal assessment of migration”. In

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<sup>33</sup> Mr. Al-Hadji Umaru (23 May 2010)

<sup>34</sup> Mr. Malam Jao (23 May 2010)

<sup>35</sup> This focus group took place on 24 May 2010.

principle, only the latter contained questions drawing on subjective interpretations on the part of the respondent. That is to say, all the questions in all the other sections would (theoretically) be liable to empirical verification. Arguably, the emphasis on questions focusing on objective 'facts', as opposed to subjective views and interpretations, is a factor that itself increases the reliability of the survey. However, this is not to disregard the real risks of the respondent failing to be in possession of the information required to answer the question truthfully (i.e., in a way corresponding to objective reality) or being unwilling to do so (see below, section 5.5.5). However, with the aforementioned exception of the questions making up section V, what this implies is that the respondents were essentially regarded, not as co-producers of reality through meaning and speech, but as (imperfect) 'conveyors' of an objective reality to an (imperfect) listener. The purpose of the interviews was to capture as accurate a picture as possible of various aspects of that objective reality.

As a general rule, the respondents consisted of the people that were originally listed as being the ones 'in charge of the stove', i.e. the household heads, as indicated by themselves, by relatives or by neighbours as of the initial listing. As mentioned above, this did not seem to be a controversial issue – never, in either of the two villages, was it the case that conflicting information was provided at different moments (initial listing, subsequent visits, interview) as to who the person 'in charge' of a given household was. However, on a relatively small number of occasions, the 'head of household' in question delegated the responsibility for answering the questions to someone else. I decided to accept this provided that the 'replacement respondent' was him/herself an adult, part of the household in question and in possession of the information required to answer the questions (of which the respondents were informed in advance).

Before beginning the interviews, the respondents were informed of my identity, the purpose of the interview, the aims of the research project, and the conditions under which the interview would take place and the information be used. In particular, I made it clear that they were entirely free to decline to answer any questions, that they were welcome to ask any questions of their own at any time during the interview, and that the information provided would not be passed on to any third parties, nor used in any way that would make it possible to identify individual cases. Only after the respondents had given their consent would I proceed with the interviews. I did not elicit their formal consent in written form – both because a large proportion of them could not read and write, and because I felt that the request would cause the respondents to adopt a more defensive posture. It was also for this latter reason that I decided not to record the interviews.

Before describing and discussing each of the sections that made up the questionnaire in detail, it is worth mentioning one last important aspect regarding the general way in which the interviews were conducted. While the main purpose of the survey was to acquire data susceptible of quantitative analysis in a robust and standardised way, I also regarded each interview as a potential source of important qualitative information. Thus, whenever the respondents provided additional relevant pieces of information beyond the ones that were required to answer the questions, I would encourage them to talk about the topic at hand in any way they saw fit, and take additional qualitative notes. This proved a wise decision – not only did this practice make it possible to collect important information on the household and village context, it also significantly improved the level of empathy between myself and the respondents.

#### *Section I: General Household Information*

Section I sought to ascertain who made up the household and what some of the characteristics of these people were. In order to do this, the respondents were asked how many adults of each gender and how many children were currently permanent members of the household. Making the various concepts that were implied in these questions clear to the respondents involved: i) explaining that the questions in this section (and in the subsequent ones) referred to the respondent's "stove" (see above); ii) explaining that the age threshold for an individual to be considered adult was 15 (i.e. all those with 15 or more years of age at the time of the interview were to be considered adults); and iii) carefully probing to ensure the adoption of a uniform set of criteria for deciding who the 'permanent' members of the household were.

With regard to this latter aspect, the respondents were thus asked sequentially: i) who the persons were that were a part of that stove at the moment; ii) which of those had been physically present and sharing in the income of that stove for at least six of the previous 12 months; and iii) whether someone else who had been physically present and sharing in the work and income of that stove for at least six of the previous 12 months was currently away. That is to say, the basic criteria for defining the composition of the stove consisted of all those people who had effectively shared in the income of the stove for at least half of the previous year. However, because there was a special interest in capturing migration dynamics, a further exception to these criteria was made allowance for: whenever one or more of the people thus identified as belonging to the stove had moved

somewhere else in order to reside permanently there (according to their own stated intention as conveyed by the respondent), *even if they had spent at least half of the previous year as effective members of the stove*, they would be considered “migrants” (and listed in section II), not as “current members” (which were the ones considered in sections I, III and IV)<sup>36</sup>.

Section I included a few other questions that require further clarification. For example, Q1.2 asked how many of the male and female adults knew how to read and write. This amounted to a question on self-reported literacy, albeit mediated by a third party. Whenever the respondents provided straightforward answers, these were recorded as provided. However, on a number of occasions the respondents would give answers along the lines of “S/he knows how to sign his/her name” or “S/he attended one year of schooling”. Whenever that was the case, probing was used to ensure that the respondents understood that the question implied being able to read *and* write actual pieces of text, regardless of previous school attendance. Still, based on a comparison of the results of the survey with the national-level literacy rates (see below, Chapters 7 and 8), I have reason to believe that the respondents deliberately or inadvertently inflated the numbers of those who are functionally literate, compared to what would have been the case had more rigorous methods been used to determine the level of literacy.

In turn, Q1.3 was posed, and subsequent probing used, to ascertain which of the “current members of the household” (as previously identified) had in the past resided away from the region<sup>37</sup> for more than 12 consecutive months (temporary return visits were disregarded in this context). This question was mostly meant to serve as a proxy for return migration, although in-migrants fulfilling this criterion would also be included in this group. However, because most in-migration to these two villages takes place from within the region, through marriage, the inclusion of a regional criterion in this question provided a better picture of the prevalence of “return migration” (while obfuscating local in-migration).

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<sup>36</sup> A typical example would be someone who had in the previous few months moved to Portugal or Senegal to live and work there. A few borderline cases existed in which the respondents had difficulty stating whether the move was of a permanent or temporary nature. In these relatively few cases (when after the application of the initial set of criteria the status of the individual could not be easily ascribed), the strategy adopted consisted of leaving it to the respondents to determine whether the persons in question were more correctly characterised as “current household members” or “migrants”.

<sup>37</sup> The “regions” were defined as corresponding to the Administrative Regions of Cacheu and Gabu, respectively (See Fig. 1, above).

With regard to Q1.6, on the ethnic make-up of the household, a decision was made to leave it to the respondents to self-define the ethnicity of the members of the household as best they saw fit, as opposed to providing a closed set of possible answers in advance. This was due to the fact that ethnicity, as all matters pertaining to self- and hetero-identification, is essentially construed and dynamic. However, none of this proved problematic in this case, given that almost all the respondents reported their households to be entirely comprised of people of the “Manjaco” or “Fula” ethnic groups (in Caiomete and Braima Sori, respectively) - and, in the very few cases when that was not the case, the answers were also very clear and did not raise any problems of interpretation (“Mauritanian”, “Pepel”<sup>38</sup>).

Finally, it is worth mentioning, with regard to section I in the questionnaire, that a deliberate option was made not to include a full household roster, which might have made it possible to characterise all the household members according to their respective sex and age. On the one hand, Q1.1 already provided sufficient information to compute the adult sex-ratio; on the other, the respondents had great difficulty answering questions related to age as expressed in the number of complete years since birth – particularly in the case of the Manjaco and especially in the case of the older household members. As of the attempts to include a household roster in the survey during the pre-testing stage, I found that, given the aims of the survey, the disadvantages of doing so (in terms of time spent and respondent fatigue) clearly outweighed the advantages.

## *Section II: Migration*

The purpose of Section II in the questionnaire was to ascertain the prevalence and characteristics of outmigration. First of all (Q2.1), the respondents were asked how many people had in the past been a part of the respondent’s household/stove (as per the criteria explained above) *and* had spent more than six of the previous 12 months away. However, as for Q1.3 (see above), those who were found to have done so but who had in the meantime returned to live in the village and share in the duties and resources of the household with a clear and manifest intention to do so *permanently* were referred back to

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<sup>38</sup> The Pepel are one of Guinea-Bissau’s ethnic groups according to the usual classification. “Mauritanian” is of course a nationality, not an ethnic group. However, the purpose of this question was to use self-reported ethnicity as a complementary indicator of intra-regional and international mobility – hence it sufficed to ascertain what the prevalence was of the non-Manjaco and non-Fula, respectively.

the group of “current household members” (as listed in Section I). Conversely, those who had left less than six months ago but for whom a clear intention to remain away *permanently* was stated were included in the list of “migrants”. That is to say, the criteria used to label individuals as “current members” or “current migrants” combined a primary objective temporal criterion with a secondary subjective “intention” criterion as stated by the respondents. This is a combination of criteria that is of course disputable, but it was applied uniformly and there were very few borderline cases left to the respondents’ assessment of “intention”.

Then, for each of the individuals thus identified as “migrants”, a set of questions (Q2.2) were asked on: gender; age; current place of residence; year when they left the household; current occupation; year of the last visit to the village; whether they had sent any money to anyone in the household in the previous 12 months (and if so, through what channel); and whether they had sent or provided any other form of material help to anyone in the household (and if so, what kind of help). Most of these questions did not prove problematic and do not require particular comments. In the case of Caiomete, however, the respondents were often unable to tell the age of their migrant former household members, as a consequence of the little importance attached to age in the Manjaco culture<sup>39</sup>, which made for a very high rate of non-responses to this particular question. The other question for which there are reasons to believe that bias may have been introduced is the one concerning remittance practices – this is addressed in section 5.5.5 (below).

### *Section III: Economic Activity and Production*

Section III started out by asking the respondents whether the people in the household had engaged in agricultural production in the previous 12 months. Whenever that was not the case, the subsequent questions 3.1b-3.6 (on crops, outputs and the hiring-in of agricultural labour) were skipped<sup>40</sup>. For those households that had indeed done so, Q3.1b then asked

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<sup>39</sup> This statement requires qualifying: in reality, age functions as a very important social marker among the Manjaco, but the way this works depends on belonging to specific age groups (“*manjuandades*”) that comprise people, sometimes born two to three years apart, who underwent initiation rites together. Age as expressed in the number of years since birth is regarded as being of little importance – to the extent that many people do not know their own age.

<sup>40</sup> It was never the case that a respondent household was made up of people who had only engaged in agricultural production as agricultural labourers: however, had that been the case, questions 3.1b-3.9 would then also have been skipped, for this group of questions was meant to apply solely to those households that had engaged in agriculture as either immediate producers or employers.

whether the land that was used to work on belonged to people that were a part of the stove or, alternatively, to a third party. In the latter event, Q3.1c asked whether something had been charged in return for using the land (money, labour time, a share of the crop, etc).

The questions included in group Q3.2, which referred to the household's output of each of the main crops as of the previous harvest (and their respective use, i.e. consumption by the household, sale or barter), were applied differently in Caiomete and in Braima Sori in order to save time. Because it was known in advance what the main crops in each region were, the respondents in the former village were only asked explicitly about wetland rice, rain-fed rice and cashew nuts; any other crops were captured (though only to the extent that they were sold to the market, as opposed to consumed or bartered) through Q3.12 (on "additional sources of income"). In the case of Braima Sori, by contrast, I sought to ascertain directly whether the respondents' households had engaged in the production of several other crops in the previous agricultural cycle (and what their outputs and use had been): groundnuts, cassava, maize and millet.

Questions Q3.4a-3.6 then referred to the hiring-in of agricultural labour. Q3.4a and Q3.4b were formulated (and probing was used) in such a way as to ascertain whether anyone, beyond the current members of the household, had provided them with labour (paid or otherwise) in the context of their own agricultural activity in the previous 12 months. Whereas Q3.4a referred to labour provided by people from the village, Q3.4b concerned labour provided by non-residents. Both were complemented by a secondary question on what it was that the people in question had received in return (money, payment in kind, reciprocal help, etc.). Q3.5 was an open-ended question, whose purpose was to acquire information on what kinds of tasks it was that the people had been hired to perform. In turn, Q3.6 asked what the maximum number of people was that had been hired by the people in the respondent's household as agricultural labourers at any given time. This was meant to serve as an indicator of the scale of (especially capitalist) agricultural activity, but it turned out to be a poor one: some households reported hiring four people for one day, while others hired two people on two different days, to perform the same task, thus rendering the information thus acquired, all by itself, rather meaningless. Because this had not been anticipated, not enough complementary information was collected (particularly on the number of days for which the people in question were hired) to make it possible to arrive at meaningful conclusions.

Questions Q3.7-3.8 were quite straightforward and did not raise any issues. The purpose of Q3.7a-d was to ascertain whether any of the current household members had ever sold, or otherwise had to forfeit, any parcel(s) of land, whereas Q3.8 asked how many cattle heads were owned by the people in the household. Q3.8b, which asked how many cattle heads had been sold by the household in the previous twelve months, was a late addition to the questionnaire. As of the pre-testing phase in Bugudjan, the other Manjaco village, I did not anticipate the possibility that the sale of cattle might constitute an important source of income in my main research sites. Indeed, that is rarely the case in Caiomete – judging from the small number of cattle owned and according to qualitative information that was obtained. However, shortly before beginning the second stage of the survey in Braima Sori, I became aware that many people there owned much larger herds and regularly sold some of their cattle as a means of livelihood. Accordingly, I decided to include a question on this as of the second phase of the survey in Braima Sori.

The following questions returned to the issue of labour. Q3.9 asked whether the people in the respondent's household had *hired* anyone to perform any non-agricultural task in the previous twelve months. Tasks like building or repairing dams in the rice paddies were considered as agricultural work – whenever the people had failed to include this in their answers to either Q3.4a or Q3.4b, but provided this information when Q3.9 was formulated, I would go back and amend the answer to the former. Then, Q3.10 (and Q3.11) asked whether any of the adults in the household had performed any tasks for someone not belonging to the household in exchange for pay (money or in kind) in the previous twelve months. Q3.10 referred to the hiring-out of labour within the village and Q3.11 to hiring-out of labour to non-residents, in order to ascertain some additional features of the local labour market. Both of these questions were complemented by sub-questions on how many of the household adult members had done so, and what the tasks were that they had been hired to perform.

The purpose of the last two questions in this section – Q3.12 and 3.13 – was to collect additional information on the household's livelihood strategies. First, Q3.12 asked whether the household had benefited from any other sources of monetary income in the previous twelve months beyond those that had been mentioned previously. By then, the respondents had already provided information on money remittances by former household members, the sale of a number of important crops and the hiring-out of wage labour. The answers to this question were thus expected to be limited to the income generated through the sale of products not included in Q3.2, provision of services as simple



commodity producers and other possible kinds of monetary support (e.g. by kin belonging to other households) – and that was indeed the case. This question was placed at the end of this section because it also served a ‘confirmatory’ purpose. When asking this question, I always recapitulated the sources of income that had been previously mentioned during the interview. Thus, the answer to Q3.12, in conjunction with the information that had been previously provided, made it possible to probe the respondents into being exhaustive in their listing of the household’s sources of income.

Similarly, Q3.13 sought to ascertain what the respondents’ estimation was of the share of wages in their household’s total monetary income during the previous twelve months. In order to keep this exercise manageable and meaningful, I decided to include only four options: wages as the sole source of monetary income; wages as the source of half or more of all the income; wages as less than half of the total income; and no wages. As I got to this stage in the questionnaire, I was already in a position to eliminate one or more of these possibilities, namely because I already knew whether wages had been forthcoming in the previous twelve months, how many people in the household had been involved in hiring out wage labour, etc. Thus, like Q3.12, this question also served a confirmatory purpose.

#### *Section IV: Asset ownership and housing characteristics*

This section comprised a series of questions on the ownership by the members of the household of a range of durable consumer goods, and its purpose was to collect information that could be used as a proxy for household wealth, namely through the subsequent computing of an asset index (see Appendix IV). The choice of assets to be included in the questionnaire was inspired by the list of assets used by Filmer and Pritchett (2001), although in my own case the option was for a much smaller list in order to reduce the duration of the interviews and the risk of respondent fatigue. The other source of inspiration for the choice of goods to be included in the questions consisted of my own visits to a number of Bissau-Guinean villages as of the first fieldwork period a few months before.

Q4.1, Q4.2 and Q4.4 referred to various features of the dwelling: type of access to electrical power (if any); main source of drinking water; and type of roof covering. Q4.2 (on the main source of drinking water) proved rather meaningless: I found that whether the

household in question relied mostly on private wells, collective wells or collective pumps depended mostly on their geographical position in the village, not on the socioeconomic characteristics of the household itself (*cf.* Johnston and Wall 2008). Q4.1 proved more useful, because access to electrical power in these villages depends on owning a (private) diesel generator, so neighbouring households are in general excluded from benefitting from this asset. The exception, which also applies to the type of roof covering, concerns the cases in which more than one household lived under the same roof. In those cases, having access and using an electrical generator, or living under a zinc roof instead of a thatch one, is a reflection not only of the household's past income and accumulated wealth, but also of those of the other households sharing the same dwelling. This is a source of non-sampling bias that I openly acknowledge, while noting that: i) in the case of the diesel generators, it was usually possible to ascertain whether they belonged to the people in the household or to another household sharing the same dwelling, given that the ability to operate the generators (as opposed to benefitting from them) depended on this; and ii) in the context of the construction of the asset index that served as a proxy for long-run wealth (see Appendix IV), the type of roof covering proved a component with very little weight (coefficient).

While the various durable household items listed under Q4.3 could potentially be characterised by the same problem (people belonging to the various different households in the same house may all listen to the same radio), I sought to minimise this problem by making sure that the respondents understood that the meaning of the question was whether the people belonging to the respondent's household individually or collectively *owned* the item in question, rather than used or benefited from it. This was well understood: some respondents would sometimes answer along the lines of "there is indeed a radio in our house, but it belongs to someone who is a member of a different stove". For this reason, I am confident that this particular set of questions constitutes an accurate indicator of household wealth.

Also with respect to Q4.3, it is worth mentioning that the version of the questionnaire used in Braima Sori differed from the one used in Caiomete insofar as, in the former, questions were asked on the ownership of a number of additional items and on the use of animal traction in agriculture. This was because, according to the focus group, the semi-structured interviews and my own observations, neither animal traction nor agricultural tools besides the machete and hand-held plough are used in Caiomete. By contrast, animal traction is widely used in Braima Sori, namely in tandem with seeders,

weeders, ploughs and carts pulled by oxen or donkeys. As I became aware of this, I decided to include questions on the ownership of all of these items in the latter village but not the former.

#### *Section V: Subjective assessment of migration*

The final section in the questionnaire included a small number of questions that focused on the respondents' subjective view of migration as good or bad, both for their household (Q5.1) and for the village as a whole (Q5.2). The question was asked exactly as phrased in the questionnaire, and among other things may be criticised for seemingly not allowing neutral options. Still, many respondents did opt for answering either "both good and bad" or "neither good nor bad". In any case, this information was mostly used in a qualitative way and for general illustrative purposes in the analysis – indeed, the most interesting data consisted of the reasons put forth for the subjective assessment, rather than the subjective assessment itself.

#### *5.5.5 Survey error: a discussion*

In general terms, survey error can take two different forms: sampling and non-sampling error (Fowler Jr. 2002). Sampling error is that which occurs as a consequence of the fact that a sample is a sub-set of the universe that does not exhibit exactly the same characteristics as the universe; that is to say, sampling error refers to those deviations from the 'true' values that occur as a function of the sample adopted. In turn, non-sampling error consists of all the deviations from the 'true' values that are not caused by sampling but by other factors, such as the positionality of the researcher or the ability and willingness of the respondents to answer the questions truthfully. What follows is a discussion of each of these two types of error in the context of this survey.

#### *Sampling error*

In any survey, minimising sampling error requires three different things (id ibid: 37):

- using a sample frame (the set of individual cases that have a chance of being selected to be a part of the sample) that does not exclude anyone in the universe;
- ii) using a probabilistic sampling procedure; and
- iii) using as large a sample as possible.

In this survey, an attempt was made to adopt all of these three strategies. First, the two sample frames corresponded to the entire sets of households in each of the two villages, listed after visiting every dwelling and asking someone in each one (or a neighbour) how many stoves there were in each case and who the person 'in charge' of each stove was. This process was made easier and more reliable by virtue of the fact that the stoves could usually be visually identified at the back of each house. Given that these two villages are relatively compact and at a distance from the neighbouring villages (i.e. their physical boundaries were easy to ascertain) and that the aforementioned procedure ensured a low degree of probability of exclusion of any households, it is my belief that the sample frame was an appropriate one.

Then, the use of a probabilistic sampling procedure – systematic sampling – ensured that every household in the sample frame stood an equal chance of being selected for participation in the survey. This particular sampling procedure was used for convenience reasons, but it should be noted that “systematic sampling should produce sampling errors equivalent to simple random sample if there is no stratification” (id *ibid*: 32). The exception to the aforementioned property of systematic sampling occurs when the *position* of the individual cases in the list making up the sample frame is itself associated with relevant characteristics. That did not seem to be the case, however: the lists used as sample frames in the context of this survey were compiled following a thorough but haphazard walk around the villages, whose physical lay-out does not itself obey any systematic rule that might correlate with individual characteristics such that bias might thus be introduced.

Now, although the method used for selecting the “first-choice” respondent households sought to ensure that sampling error was minimised, the fact that it was not always possible to conduct the interviews in those households in the case of Caiomete (though not in Braima Sori: see above, section 5.5.3) is likely to have somewhat increased the amount of sampling error. As it turns out, out of the 72 interviews made in Caiomete, 51 corresponded to ‘1<sup>st</sup>-choice households’, 15 were 2<sup>nd</sup> choices, 5 were 3<sup>rd</sup> choices and 1 was a 4<sup>th</sup> choice. The household heads in question could not be interviewed because they were absent as of my various visits (there no instances of refusal to participate), and because the constraints that I faced in terms of time and resources prevented me from

further extending my stay. According to neighbours and kin, the absences of the 'first-choice' respondents were mostly due to having left temporarily to work elsewhere, for ceremonial purposes or to being out in the fields working. There are good reasons to believe that, in some cases, these absences were associated with specific profiles in terms of the variables being measured: for example, the inclusion in the survey of those households whose heads had left to work temporarily in agriculture elsewhere in the region would likely have increased the prevalence of the hiring-out of wage labour as 'captured' in the survey. Although this was hardly avoidable given the practical constraints that I faced, there is no doubt that this is likely to have increased the amount of sampling error. However, there are three mitigating factors that should be taken into account so as not to overstate the detrimental impact of this upon the reliability of the survey: first, this problem only occurred in Caiomete; second, even in Caiomete, the share of 'first-choice' respondents that could not be interviewed (less than 30%), although significant, was not extremely high; and third, some of the reasons for the absences (for example, having left to a neighbouring village to mourn a deceased kin) can, given their more or less random character, plausibly be expected to be very weakly associated with the variables being measured.

The third factor influencing sampling error is the size of the sample. Here, it should be noted that, for any survey comprising dozens of questions, no definitive way exists of determining what the 'optimal sample size' should be even for a desired level of precision – given that, for a given sample size, the level of precision itself varies from question to question depending on the distribution of the variable in question (id *ibid*:34-37). In my survey, the option was for relative sample sizes that were as large as possible given my practical constraints (1/5 and 1/3 of the sample frames, respectively), while at the same time ensuring that the absolute number of respondents in each of the two samples was above a minimum of 30. Here, too, these (absolute and relative) sample sizes arguably allow for relatively accurate representations of the 'true' characteristics of the universe.

Yet another specific problem raised by my survey design consisted of the fact that it sought to characterise the current migrant population by reference to currently-existing resident households. Obviously, this leaves out those migrants that left without leaving any former household members behind (i.e. the entire household ceased to be present as a consequence of migration). This is a common problem for surveys of migration, for which there are no easy solutions (Bilsborrow *et al* 1984). In this particular survey, this problem is likely to have affected the overall quantitative estimation of the migrant stocks as well as

the qualitative characterisation of the migrant population, but it is also likely to have had less of an impact upon the issue of the effects of migration upon local welfare and production (for such channels as remittances cease to apply).

All of this is not to say that sampling error could not have been further reduced in this survey. It certainly could have, namely in the ways indicated above: further increasing the sample size; dedicating more time and effort to ensuring that only 'first choice' respondents were actually interviewed; and somehow capturing those migrants that left with their entire household. However, given the practical constraints with which I was faced, as well as the mitigating circumstances to the aforementioned problems, I would contend that the sources of sampling error in this survey were minimised to the maximum possible extent.

#### *Non-sampling error*

Discussing non-sampling error (which is notably harder both to estimate and to minimise than sampling error) implies addressing issues of validity (degree of approximation to the 'true' features of the universe) and reliability (consistency of measurement). Now, with the exception of the questions that made up section V, all the questions that were included in the questionnaire were of an objective character – i.e. they did not in principle draw on the respondents' subjective interpretations or assessments. This is an advantage from the point of view of both validity and reliability. However, this does not eliminate the risk of the respondent not being in possession of the information required to answer a given question, or of (consciously or unconsciously) doing so in an inaccurate or untruthful way.

The first of the latter two cases (the respondent not being in possession of the required information) typically yields either non-responses or responses that were made up. Non-responses were recorded as such and their absolute frequency is generally provided in the tables contained in Chapters 7 and 8. The problem with these occurs mainly when the incidence of non-response is itself correlated with the distribution of the variable in question. This may have been the case in some instances: for example, the likelihood of non-response to the question "what is the current occupation of migrant X?" is likely to be associated with the period of time that has gone by since s/he left, which in turn is also likely to be associated with his/her subsequent socioprofessional trajectory and current occupation. Fortunately, however, the absolute level of non-response did not prove a very

significant problem in the survey except in a relatively small number of questions (particularly on some of the migrants' characteristics). Because there is not much that can be done about it *a posteriori*, the option has been to be especially careful in interpreting the data in the very few cases that the latter was unusually high.

The risk of the respondents making up the answer to some of the questions (either because they did not know the 'true' answer or because they wished to convey a different picture of reality than was actually the case) is a risk that is present in any survey and which can never be eliminated. I have sought to minimise this risk by eliciting the respondents' cooperation in answering truthfully, through an introduction in which I explained that the purpose of the survey was to gain the best possible understanding of the social and economic reality of these villages, and stressed that I was not associated with any governmental or non-governmental organisation that might subsequently implement any initiatives in the area. Still, I do not wish to gloss over the fact that non-sampling error of this sort is likely to have occurred (hopefully, to a limited extent) by virtue of at least four factors: i) the fact that only the heads of households were interviewed, with the resulting possibility of voluntary or involuntary bias in what regards the questions pertaining to the other members of the household; ii) the respondents' consideration that their answers might, however indirectly, influence the likelihood of future development projects being implemented in their villages (and possibly benefiting them directly as a function of their individual characteristics as depicted in the survey); iii) the implications of my positionality as western researcher; and iv) the effect of the positionality of my assistants/interpreters Messrs. Mendes and Djalo (Mr. Mendes also served as an enumerator in 17 interviews).

It is very hard to estimate the extent to which these factors may have had an impact in terms of skewing the results of the survey. It is certainly possible to identify some of the questions in which they are more likely to have had an effect. Questions related to outputs and income, for example, can *a priori* be considered more sensitive. It is plausible that some of the respondents may have deliberately wished to hide some of their "additional sources of income", failed to report remittance-sending practices or misreported their crop outputs so as to appear more destitute than really is the case and thus increase the likelihood (as perceived by them) of future initiatives aimed at improving their condition. In the specific case of Caiomete, this can also be linked to certain features of the Manjaco culture as reported by previous authors, namely its 'egalitarian' character and the amount of 'discretion' surrounding wealth. Gable (1997:213) reported that:

*“if secrecy is a form of etiquette through which the Manjaco community members cooperate to keep up the façade of privacy, then the secret, it seems, hides wealth; and wealth is associated with something sinister. In associating wealth with the sinister, Manjaco participate in what amounts to an anthropological cliché: the notion that in small-scale societies of a variety of types, but all to some degree “egalitarian”, wealth is evil.”*

Moreover, the fact that Mr. Mendes was himself a native and part-time resident of Caiomete may also have caused some of the respondents to wish to hide certain aspects of their household’s situation for more direct reasons (although on the other hand it also made it possible to undertake the survey and access other qualitative information in more favourable conditions).

All of this is particularly hard to estimate. My personal, subjective impressions while the survey was being conducted were that, with virtually no exceptions, the respondents were very cooperative, hardly ever hesitated before providing the answers (although on some occasions they asked for the help of other family members present so as to remind them of certain aspects) and provided answers that seemed consistent both throughout each interview (and taking into account their own, and their dwellings’, visible characteristics) and between one interview and the next. Neither did the ‘taboo’ around wealth seem to apply in the case of present-day Caiomete to the extent described by Gable (ibid). The only two questions in which my personal impression is that there was a (possibly deliberate) misrepresentation of reality were Q1.2 (on self-reported literacy: see also above, section 6.6.4) and, in the case of Caiomete, the part of Q2.2 that asked whether the migrants had sent any money to the household during the previous twelve months.

The reason for believing that the answers to Q1.2 ‘inflated’ the ‘true’ level of literacy consists of the fact that the estimated level of adult literacy in the village according to the survey is considerably higher than the regional average (even though this is also at least partly due to the fact that Caiomete has its own primary school). Given that I did not impose a specific criterion for ‘being literate’ beyond “knowing how to read and write” (as asked in the question), it is plausible that some of the respondents may have wished to optimistically depict themselves, or the other members of their households, as literate – even if they had only attended school for a short period and were functionally illiterate. As regards the question on remittances in Caiomete, the main grounds for caution lie in the



very large discrepancy with regard to the level of such practices in the case of Braima Sori and in the fact that, while naming the migrants that had departed from their households, some respondents would complain that “they do not do enough for us” (and consequently those respondents may have wished to stress just that by not reporting monetary help in the previous 12 months even when that help may actually have been forthcoming).

These are problems that inevitably afflict any survey, and whose impact is particularly hard both to eliminate and to estimate. By seeking to reflect upon them before, during and after the conduction of the survey, I have sought to mitigate them as much as possible, and, in some cases, to take caution when reporting and interpreting the results. However, but for the aforementioned (partial) exceptions, I am confident that the results of the survey constitute a valid and reliable representation of the socioeconomic reality of these two villages.

#### *Error beyond the survey*

While the survey of migration and development undertaken in Caiomete and Braima Sori constituted the single most important method of primary data collection in the context of this research project, the conclusions that were derived from it were also framed and influenced by a wealth of qualitative data obtained through observation, informal interviews, semi-structured interviews and two focus groups.

Again, as is always the case, the information collected through these methods must be regarded as partial, incomplete and potentially misleading. In particular, it is clear that the (especially subjective) information conveyed by my interviewees very much depended on their own personal position and circumstances. The influence of this effect was most clear in some cases: the interview with the village chief in Braima Sori, for example; or the focus groups, which only included male participants who shared a common language with myself. I shall not gloss over the likely impact of this – for example, in terms of obfuscating certain aspects of gender relations, or conveying a somewhat mythical account of the history of the villages or of the migratory experience. However, I will stress two mitigating circumstances that should be taken into account. On the one hand, these are problems that, to a smaller or greater extent, inevitably afflict any research project with an empirical component. On the other hand, as I have hopefully explained in this chapter, I have sought to deploy the two main available antidotes against error of any sort – reflexivity and

triangulation – so as to minimise error and put forth valid and reliable conclusions. This being said, let us now move on to the presentation and discussion of the actual data – first at the level of the social formation as a whole, then in the context of the two village-level case-studies.

## 6. Migration and development in Guinea-Bissau: a macro-level overview

Guinea-Bissau is a small West African country that ranks among the poorest in the world. In 2010, its GDP *per capita* was the fifth lowest of all countries (554 US\$ PPP), and its human development ranking scarcely fared any better: in the same year, it was the sixth lowest among all the countries for which data were available – reflecting, among other things, a life expectancy at birth of under 49 years<sup>41</sup>. As shall be argued below, this state of underdevelopment, as reflected in these and a range of other statistics, is the result of deleterious actions (including predatory mercantile colonialism, armed conflict, misguided economic policy initiatives and persistent political instability), but they are also, and crucially, the result of a central omission: the failure of a sustained process of productive modernisation to take hold throughout and despite colonisation, developmentalism and market-oriented liberalisation.

Understanding this historical background is crucial to discussing the prospects for the economic development of Guinea-Bissau in and of itself. It is also necessary in order to locate its migration history, and to assess the ‘feed-back’ socioeconomic effects of migration. This chapter attempts to do all this, beginning with a brief overview of the historical trajectory of the country which emphasises its political-economic dimensions (7.1). The following section (7.2) contains a discussion and analysis of Guinea-Bissau’s political economy in the present day. Section 7.3 provides a brief historical overview of migration within and from the country and a characterisation of its diaspora in the present, while section 7.4 closes the chapter by discussing the main available evidence with respect to macro-level socioeconomic impacts of migration from the country.

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<sup>41</sup> Sources: <http://hdrstats.undp.org/en/indicators/49806.html> ,  
<http://hdrstats.undp.org/en/indicators/62006.html> and  
<http://hdrstats.undp.org/en/indicators/69206.html>.

## **6.1 Recent historical background**

### *6.1.1 Portugal's 'backward colonialism' and the independence struggle*

Portugal's earliest contacts with the territory that was to become Guinea-Bissau date back to the 15th century and led to the gradual creation of a series of trading outposts along the Western coast of the African continent (Newitt 1981; Pélissier 1989; Nafafé 2007). By far the main 'commodity' sought by the Portuguese traders under the aegis of the king consisted of slaves, in the context of the infamous transatlantic trade that span the 16th to 19th centuries. Inland incursions by the Portuguese were limited: the slave trade mainly took place in the aforementioned coastal outposts and relied on the purchase of slaves from local kingships, typically in exchange for basic manufactures brought over from Europe. Despite the formal abolition of the slave trade in the early 19th Century (Pélissier 1989(I):42), the export of slaves by the Portuguese from the area of present-day Guinea-Bissau persisted until late in that century, and was only gradually superseded by palm and coconut oil, groundnuts (from 1840-50 onwards) and rubber (from 1890 onwards) (Galli and Jones 1987:17-22).

By the turn of the 19th to 20th Centuries and the onset of colonialism proper, Portugal's fragility as a metropolis, and the growing competition it faced from more advanced European powers, were apparent: out of seven trading companies operating in the area at the time, only one was Portuguese, and not more than 18% of Portuguese Guinea's foreign trade between 1908 and 1913 originated in or was destined for Portugal (PAIGC 1974:98). Portugal had secured *de jure* colonial control over Portuguese Guinea as of the 1884-85 Berlin Conference, however, and in 1927 (in the wake of the 1926 right-wing coup in Portugal) used it to enforce a strict trade regime to the detriment of other European trading companies, in an attempt to confer a monopoly on trade with Portuguese Guinea to the Portuguese financial bourgeoisie<sup>42</sup>. However, as a consequence of Portugal's economic backwardness, colonial mercantile reliance on Portuguese Guinea as an outlet for metropolitan manufactures and industrial goods differed substantially from that of other colonial powers: as late as the 1930s, up to 70% of Portuguese Guinea's imports still originated in third countries, and even by 1960 the figure was still 45% (id *ibid*:98).

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<sup>42</sup> Particularly the industrial and financial group Companhia União Fabril (CUF), represented in Guinea-Bissau by its affiliate Casa Gouveia (Forrest 1992:25).

Portugal's backward character as a colonial power did not prevent it from seeking to enforce such typical colonial measures as hut and consumption taxes (the former from 1903 onwards), the recruitment of forced labour, and, especially, the imposition of mandatory crops (mainly groundnuts) (Pélissier 1989 (II):113; Galli 1995:64). Neither did it prevent it from undertaking brutal punitive and 'pacification' expeditions, despite – or because of – the relatively poor reach of the colonial administration, which, in its initial stages, largely relied on local chieftains for the purpose of tax collection (Forrest 1992:16-19). What it did prevent it from undertaking was the actual development of Portuguese Guinea, even in the subordinate forms practiced in other African colonies (Galli 1995:52)

Portuguese Guinea suffered from widespread neglect on the part of the metropolis. Although it was subject to mercantile exploitation, it did not experience the emergence of either any relevant local manufacturing or of a generalised plantation economy. Throughout the colonial era, the export of metropolitan capital to the colony was minimal: by 1960, the industrial fabric was limited to "two small oil-producing facilities, three rice-hulling plants, one paper-paste plant, one rubber-processing workshop, and five small wood-cutting facilities" (PAIGC 1974:127). Access by the autochthonous population to health and education was also extremely limited (Cabral 2008). The extremely backward level of infrastructural development at the time of independence is also telling: by 1974, there were no railways, the only paved road stretched for only 60km and the country's harbour infrastructure was very rudimentary and largely limited to Bissau (PAIGC 1974: 128). In addition to the lack of investment and capital export, motivated by the semi-peripheral and economically backward character of the metropolis itself, the backward character of Portuguese colonialism additionally took the form of a paternalistic attitude towards "indigenous" labour and the systematic undermining of the possibility of endogenous accumulation, through attempts to eliminate small local traders, as well as land and labour laws that reflected the (corporatist) populist ideology of the colonial administration (Galli 1995:52-53)

Economic, political and cultural repression by a racist and repressive regime, alongside the general absence of any improvement in living standards, led to popular resistance from a very early stage. However, it was only after World War II, as repression intensified and the drive towards independence across the African continent began to gather momentum, that this resistance crystallised into a broad-based national liberation movement – the African Party for the Liberation of Guinea and Cape Verde, or PAIGC, which was created in 1956 and straddled the two eponymous colonies (Davidson 1969:31;

Forrest 1992:31-32). Amílcar Cabral, who founded and led the PAIGC throughout most of the independence struggle, would, prior to his assassination in 1973, become a particularly well-known and respected figure in the context of Third World liberation and pan-Africanism, and his reputation as an intellectual and independence leader spread throughout the world (Chabal 1983).

A decisive moment for the liberation movement came in 1959, with the massacre in Guinea-Bissau's Pijiguiti harbour of 50 workers who had gone on strike for higher wages. Reacting to this massacre, the recently-formed PAIGC committed itself to the pursuit of armed struggle against Portuguese colonialism (Davidson 1969:31-32). Thus, after a couple of years of preparation, 1961 saw the beginning of direct action (sabotage and attacks on colonial facilities), followed in 1963 by overt warfare with support from China and the Eastern Bloc countries (Davidson 1969:36; PAIGC 1974:148). The war was particularly protracted, lasting from 1963 until the Portuguese democratic revolution in 1974, and hard: the Bissau-Guinean theatre of operations is often described as the hardest of the three in which the Portuguese colonial war was fought, involving the largest relative number of casualties for the colonial army<sup>43</sup>.

Although the war eventually came to an end by virtue of the overthrow of the dictatorship in Portugal in April 1974, rather than as a consequence of any decisive military victory by the PAIGC, its last few years had seen the latter gain the upper hand. In 24 September 1973, the PAIGC indeed declared independence unilaterally in Madina do Boé, despite not yet being in full control of the territory. Moreover, the increasing hardship and futility of the war in Guinea-Bissau as perceived by many Portuguese combatants in this front are often argued to have been determinant for the role subsequently played by the military as of the 1974 Revolution in Portugal<sup>44</sup>.

As the PAIGC gained and consolidated control over increasing portions of the territory of Guinea-Bissau, it began to undertake the political and economic administration of the liberated areas, which included the setting up and daily running of schools, healthcare facilities and a network of 'People's Stores', where local producers sold their produce and bought other agricultural products as well as a limited range of consumer

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<sup>43</sup> Cf. the television series "A Guerra" (RTP-Portugal, 2007-2010), in Portuguese, which contains a wealth of details, analysis and first-hand accounts of the military and political events that marked the Portuguese colonial war of 1961-1974, known to Bissau-Guineans as the independence struggle (available online at :

<http://www.macua1.org/guerrajf/aguerra.html>; accessed April 12, 2011).

<sup>44</sup> See previous footnote.

goods (Davidson 1969). Following the country's full independence in 1973-1974, this centralised marketing system was then extended to cover the entire country (Forrest 1992: 87-88).

As the war came to an end and independence brought a close to the colonial chapter of Guinea-Bissau's history, spirits ran high with the perspective of independent post-colonial development. However, the PAIGC, now in power, had been through 11 years of war and inherited very little by way of infrastructural or productive capacity left over from the colonial days. Moreover, what it did inherit was the colonial administration's underdeveloped bureaucracy, which effectively left the bulk of day-to-day administration, particularly in rural areas, to traditional local-level power structures (Forrest 2002). In addition to this, it had suffered a significant blow with the assassination in 1973 of its historical leader Cabral, which paved the way for the subsequent decades of intestine strife (Castanheira 1995; Temudo 2009).

#### *6.1.2 From developmentalism to liberalisation*

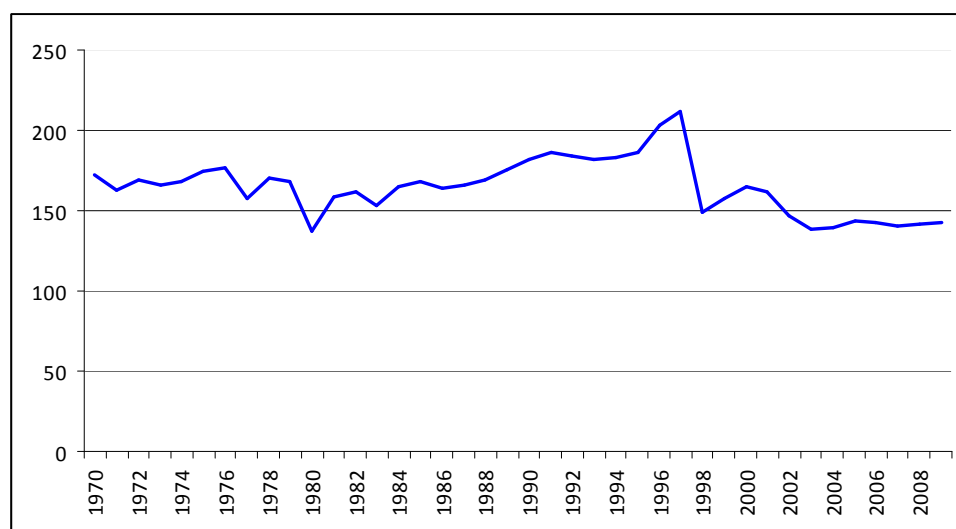
Though the PAIGC was formally non-aligned, its ideology and political programme clearly followed 'Third World socialism' lines (Galli and Jones 1987; Lopes 1987; Forrest 1992). This socialist line was initially pursued through the nationalisation of the formal economy (Forrest 2002:239), including the centralised setting of prices for both the purchase of agricultural products from the local producers and the provision of consumption goods (through the network of 120 People's Stores), as well as the creation and operation of SOCOMIN, the government agency responsible for imports and exports. The intention, certainly not original in developmental terms, was to channel a part of the agricultural surplus into the urban sector, particularly in order to foster the creation and development of an (until then virtually inexistent) industrial sector.

As pointed out by Forrest (2002), however, the strategy soon proved ill-designed. The purchase prices offered to agricultural producers were too low, which not only effectively denied access by the latter to the consumption goods provided by the People's Stores (to which added the very shortage of those goods and increasing problems of corruption and embezzlement), but also led local producers to increasingly refrain from selling their products through official channels, and to rely instead on the parallel and 'informal' barter and trading systems that remained in place throughout the colonial and post-colonial eras.

Developmental efforts in other spheres were also beset by their own problems: the industrialisation effort included the setting up of a variety of state-owned companies and facilities, some of which operated with relative success for a few years. However, the chips were unduly stacked on over-sized operations and production plants, and many of these eventually ran into trouble due to the lack of skilled personnel and the insufficient supply of raw materials. In their turn, rural development initiatives did not bring about the desired outcomes in terms of boosting agricultural productivity. Additionally, the exchange rate, which was consistently kept high to allow for the cheap import of capital and intermediate goods, significantly compromised the competitiveness of export crops (Galli 1990:53).

The distortions and imbalances that thus came to characterise the economy of Guinea-Bissau, which are apparent for example in the shrinkage of the formal economy from 1976 onwards (Figure 6.1), became particularly severe in the mid-1980s, with rising inflation and an accumulating foreign deficit. By then, the heyday of socialist developmentalism, which had corresponded to the rule of Luís Cabral (Amílcar's brother), had already been left behind when L. Cabral was overthrown by his Principal Commissioner João "Nino" Vieira in 1980. The coup was primarily motivated by long-standing animosity between elements of Cape Verdean and Bissau-Guinean descent within the PAIGC and State hierarchies, with the latter perceiving the preponderance of the former as an enduring form of foreign domination (Temudo 2009:259). The consequences of the 1980 coup included the separation of Cape Verde and Guinea-Bissau into separate, independent countries, each of which went its own way; the removal of numerous individuals of Cape Verdean descent from positions of power in the State bureaucracy in Guinea-Bissau, and their expulsion or flight from the country; the increasingly autocratic concentration of power by Vieira (as opposed to the relatively more collegial revolutionary bodies of the pre-1980 period); and the gradual move towards a more pragmatic and clientelistic political culture, from the more idealistic socialist developmentalism that had preceded it (Forrest 1992; George *et al* 2010).





**Figure 6.1 Guinea-Bissau: GDP *per capita* (constant 2000 US\$), 1970-2009<sup>45</sup>**

The combination of severe macroeconomic and foreign imbalances with the willingness by the ruling elite to adopt whichever strategies enabled it to consolidate its own power led to a range of liberalisation and privatisation reforms initiated in 1984 and further pursued as of an IMF- and World-Bank-sponsored structural adjustment programme launched in 1987 (Van Maanen 1996:30-32). These involved “the encouragement of private enterprise, the devaluation of the currency, reduction of government spending, cuts in food subsidies and the raising of producer prices, especially of cashew nuts and palm kernels”, alongside financial assistance by the IMF over a period of three years (Forrest 2002:341). Symbolically, it also involved severing the remaining ideological ties that bound the PAIGC with its revolutionary and socialist origins, and the full embrace of a pragmatic donor-driven stance.

Liberalisation and structural adjustment were hardly more successful than developmentalism, however (Galli 1990; Forrest 2002). The reduction in social expenditure produced visible negative consequences in the areas of health and education (Paulo and Jao 1996, Monteiro and Martins 1996), and the privatisation of many state-owned enterprises was implemented according to clientelistic logics, with little benefit accruing to either the State or the economy. Basically, the measures aimed at correcting the external and macroeconomic imbalances brought on the demise of the prior attempts at State-led industrialisation without giving rise to sustained dynamics driven by the private sector.

<sup>45</sup> Source: WBDI.

Officially recorded output did pick up modestly after 1984 (Fig. 6.1), and an incipient (formal) private sector did emerge and begin to expand. At the same time, the production and export of cashew nuts increased considerably, boosted by explicit donor encouragement, the high world market prices for cashew nuts at the time and the lifting of depressing price controls at purchase, to the point of becoming the country's main export from then onwards (Forrest 2002; Temudo 2009b). These modest successes were partly a consequence of a favourable context that was rather short-lived (given that the world price of cashew nuts has remained on a declining trend ever since: Barry *et al* 2007), and partly the effect of the removal of the price stranglehold, previously placed upon rural producers, in terms of bringing them back into the formal economy. What they arguably did not reflect was actual agricultural development, in the sense of productivity-enhancing structural changes in the technical or social relations of production.

To add insult to injury, the donor credits destined for agricultural development in the context of structural adjustment were for the most part captured by a small fraction of government officials and members of the elite who doubled, formally if not always in reality, as *ponteiros* (commercial farmers) (Galli 1990:62-64; Pereira *et al* 1992:14). This meant that these credits were often used for unproductive purposes: by 1992, 96% of the land concessions that had been granted by the government to commercial farmers<sup>46</sup> laid fallow, in an indication of the extent to which liberalisation brought little effective upgrading or modernisation to (commercial) agriculture (Pereira *et al* 1992:14). In their turn, smallholder producers, whether producing for their own consumption or for the market, saw little change to their situation.

All of the above led to increasing disaffection between the rural population and the post-independence urban political elite<sup>47</sup>. It also led to the consolidation of a rentier

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<sup>46</sup> The post-independence Land Law of 1975 (Law no. 4/75) transferred property of all the land to the State. A decade and a half later, reflecting the need for a legislative framework consistent with the earlier process of economic liberalisation, a new Land Law (no. 5/98) was drafted that reasserted that all the land is the common property of all the people, but which also introduced the possibility of the State granting land for permanent or temporary use, in both urban and rural areas, under either customary use ("according to the customs and practices of each community") or concession. Concessions formally last for 90 years and entail tax obligations (World Bank 2006:21). This Law recognises *de jure* the *de facto* co-existence of legally-sanctioned customary tenure and concessions by the government. However, it is yet to be formally signed by the President, thus fulfilling all constitutional criteria for entering into effect, despite having been approved by the Parliament almost 15 years ago (Interview no.9).

<sup>47</sup> Forrest (1992) uses the term "de-linkage" to refer to this increasing distance and disaffection between the urban-political, post-independence elite and the rural majority of Bissau-Guineans – a process which this author traces back to the immediate post-independence period. My argument

mentality on the part of the latter that certainly contributed to the escalation, in the late 1990s, of the level of conflict over access to rents and privileges through control of the State system. It was by then quite clear that the dominant class in Guinea-Bissau<sup>48</sup> – the *nomenklatura* – was not grounded in a solid and independent economic base based on the private accumulation of capital. Rather, “the foundations of its power as a class lay in the power of the State itself” (Cardoso 1996:144-145). Therefore, it was only logical that the eventual dismantling of authoritarian rule would lead to bitter in-fighting over control of the State.

### 6.1.3 After liberalisation: the unstable politics of the elites

Economic liberalisation in the mid-1980s was followed by political liberalisation in the early 1990s, paving the way for the first general and presidential elections in 1994 (George *et al* 2010). This gave a more formalised and open character to the political process, which from then on was no longer the exclusive remit of the PAIGC and President Vieira<sup>49</sup>. A number of new political formations emerged to give voice to various segments of society (such as the Balanta ethnic group<sup>50</sup>, which constituted the main basis of the Partido da Renovação Social: Temudo 2008:249). Other, smaller parties mainly expressed the views of elements of the urban elite who were disaffected from Vieira. The latter included in particular what Cardoso (1996:144-145) has described as an emerging political class comprising lower-level State bureaucrats, relatively skilled professionals and a small number of small bourgeois, as opposed to the *nomenklatura* proper (which was the result of an earlier process of take-over of State power by the PAIGC leadership that had led the independence struggle).

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here is that the liberalisation phase of the country’s history signified the final consolidation of ‘the city’ (“*praça*”, i.e. the urban and mostly foreign-oriented economy) and ‘the village’ (“*tabanca*”, i.e. the rural population) as largely disconnected realms with diverging interests.

<sup>48</sup> This assessment does not consider the traditional authorities – chieftains, elders’ councils, etc. – to be a dominant *class* in Guinea-Bissau. While these authorities hold a significant level of political and legal power to this day (especially in the rural areas), this power is usually quite localised, unarticulated with that of other chiefs and elders, and lacking in class consciousness, in addition to involving limited exploitation in the strict sense of the word.

<sup>49</sup> Vieira ruled as head of the State and of the PAIGC until being ousted and forced into exile in the context of the civil war of 1998-98. He eventually returned to the country, was again elected President in 2004, and subsequently murdered by members of the military in 2009 (George *et al* 2010).

<sup>50</sup> The Balanta contributed the bulk of the PAIGC armed forces during the independence war (and in fact remain a majority in the military to this day), but never quite had a level of access to political power befitting their historical role and military prominence. They constitute the main electoral base of support of the Partido da Renovação Social (PRS) - the only party so far to have interrupted (in 2000-2003) the monopoly of the PAIGC over government (George *et al* 2010).

However, the ability of party politics to express conflicting interests was a limited one. On the one hand, ethnic-based politics was largely limited to the phenomenon of the PRS (which had, and has, an ethnic character in form but less so in content, as it mostly expresses the disaffection of the rural base of the PAIGC independence army vis-à-vis the post-independence urban elite). Moreover, the structure of Bissau-Guinean society did not lend itself easily to political expression through class-based parties, as the majority of the country was, and is, made up of rural smallholders. Thus, the crucial arenas of political struggle and control remained the PAIGC itself and the military, with control over these providing the ability to access and put to personal and political use various rents from largely foreign-oriented sources: foreign aid, the granting of concessions over natural resources and, in some cases and especially in more recent times, participation in, or connivance with, arms and drugs trafficking. This control was ultimately and effectively exerted by Vieira for almost two decades, but long-standing factional and ethnic grievances within the military and against Vieira eventually surfaced in the late 1990s (George *et al* 2010).

Indeed, it was Vieira's failure to ensure the allegiance of the military in the context of an episode linked with the trafficking of arms to neighbouring Casamance (albeit symptomatic of wider discontent) that would trigger an uprising which would turn into the country's only civil war in 1998-99 – fought between the majority of the military and numerous veterans from the independence struggle, on one side, and the minority of the military that remained loyal to Vieira, along with troops from Senegal and the Republic of Guinea that came to the President's rescue, on the other (Temudo 2008, Zeveryno 2005). No reliable estimates are available on the number of casualties caused by the 1998-99 conflict. However, the war was mainly fought in and around Bissau (Temudo 2008:246), and the fact that it was thus geographically confined contributed to what is commonly described as a relatively limited number of casualties (numbering in the thousands). Still, it did have other major, albeit temporary, social and economic consequences: economic activity and output were quite severely affected (see Figure 7.1, above); transports, communications and access to imported goods were significantly disrupted; and the periods of heavier fighting saw a temporary return to the countryside by a majority of the population of Bissau (upwards of 200,000 internally displaced persons), who fled the on-going fighting to safer areas (Temudo 2009b:256).

The conflict ended with Vieira's defeat and ousting from power, and was followed shortly after by the elections that brought the PRS into government and its leader, Kumba

lálá, to the Presidency. The war also marked the beginning of a period of prolonged political instability, largely due to the fact that the ousting of Vieira after 19 years had created a power vacuum that encouraged previously subordinated elements and factions to struggle for ascendancy. Sporadically, this has taken on a violent character, particularly whenever it concerned control over the military – between 2000 and 2010, as many as five different Chiefs of Staff of the Armed Forces have been appointed, and none of the first four left the post of their own will: three were murdered, the fourth was overthrown and arrested by his deputy (George *et al* 2010).

The PAIGC returned to government in 2004, after which Vieira himself staged a surprising return from exile to win the presidential elections of 2005 (albeit without the support of the PAIGC, from which he had been expelled in the wake of the war). However, the proverbial cat had been let out of the bag, and factional fighting for supremacy would remain a constant from then onwards through means both constitutional (especially within the PAIGC) and non-constitutional (through sporadic involvement by the military). A paroxysm of this factional instability and violence was reached when the Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces, Tagme Na Waie, and President Vieira were murdered in 1-2 March 2009 (George *et al* 2010; ICG 2009).

At this political level, the current situation remains characterised by precarious and shifting balances. The current government of Carlos Gomes Junior, in power since 2008<sup>51</sup>, is strongly backed by donors and international actors, but remains politically contested by many in Guinea-Bissau, and on several occasions has barely succeeded in ensuring its own political survival – namely by narrowly thwarting a coup in 2010. The structure of power within the military also remains precarious and unclear, as does the current willingness of the military as a whole to refrain from circumventing the Constitution and intervening directly in the political process (id *ibid*).

In a long-run perspective, however, the key thing to be said about political developments in the post-1999 period is that they have not reflected a clash of fundamentally-opposed social forces or political projects for the country. Rather, to a large extent they have reflected informal struggles within the political and military elites over access to power, rents and privileges to be directly obtained either through the State

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<sup>51</sup> Gomes Junior and the PAIGC had already been in power after 2004, until losing a vote of no confidence in the National Assembly in mid-2007. 2007-2008 saw the nomination of several different cabinets on precarious political grounds. The current government came out of the general elections of October 2008 (George *et al* 2010).

apparatus or through participation in illegal activities. As the 1998-99 civil war gradually becomes a more distant memory, overtures have been made by foreign capital with a view to setting up large-scale operations exploiting natural resources such as oil, phosphates, bauxite and land for the cultivation of agrofuels: actual extraction or production has not yet begun in either of these, but negotiations and prospection have been under way (George *et al* 2010b).

Thus, Cardoso's (1996; see above) analysis arguably remains largely valid today. The primary content of current Bissau-Guinean politics can be described as consisting of shifting alliances and conflicts of interests among and between various fractions comprising (i) the military elites, with their own political linkages; (ii) the 'old' PAIGC political hierarchy and State bureaucracy; and (iii) Cardoso's "new political [middle] classes". Crucially, however, all of these, with the partial exception of the military, are largely urban-based, in the sense that they maintain few linkages with what goes on in the rural areas where the majority of the population lives. There is no significant 'classical' bourgeoisie, either urban or rural, because there is little by way of a capitalist organisation of production (see section 6.2, below). In their turn, the popular classes mostly comprise relatively independent rural smallholders, who watch the struggles for power from afar and with limited direct interest (Temudo 2008:258). Of the three dominant groups indicated above, the latter is apparently the one with the greatest 'revolutionary potential', but for the time being it also seems the weakest of the three.

## **6.2 Political economy**

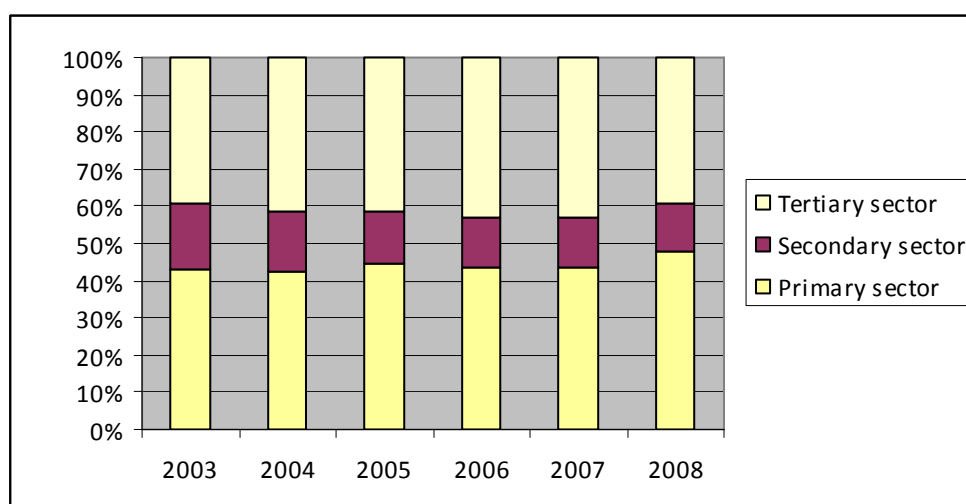
### *6.2.1 Economic structure and insertion in the world economy*

The structure of the Bissau-Guinean economy is heavily dominated by the primary sector and, within the latter, by small and largely independent production in agriculture. According to the national accounts, primary sector value-added amounted to 40%-50% of GDP in 2003-2008, with agriculture by itself accounting for around one third (Figure 7.2; MEDR 2009)<sup>52</sup>. Agriculture constitutes the primary occupation for around 80% of the

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<sup>52</sup> In a context like Guinea-Bissau, national account statistics are of course particularly fallible, and in this case probably understate the significance of the primary sector and of agriculture for the following reasons: i) a large share of market transactions are not subject to any sort of official record and therefore fail to be captured by official statistics; and ii) to a much greater extent than in more

population (PNUD 2006:4; MEPIR 2010:9), in addition to accounting for more than 85% of total exports (in 2009: BCEAO 2009). Despite accelerated urbanisation in the late colonial and post-independence eras, Guinea-Bissau remains a country where about 70% of the population live in areas considered rural<sup>53</sup> and where more than four fifths of the population engage directly in primary-sector activity (MEPIR 2010:9). By contrast, the modern private sector is small and at a very incipient stage of development: a 2006 World Bank study (cit. in MEPIR 2010b:4) indicated the total number of formally-constituted private firms in Guinea-Bissau to be a paltry 296, 159 of which were small and medium enterprises<sup>54</sup>.



**Figure 6.2 Guinea-Bissau: Sectoral structure of GDP, 2003-2008<sup>55</sup>**

Agricultural production is dominated by a small number of key crops (Figure 6.3). Rice, which constitutes the basic staple of most of the population<sup>56</sup>, takes centre stage as far as food crops are concerned. In a number of paddy and upland varieties, it is grown and consumed throughout Guinea-Bissau, including in the islands. Depending on the region,

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fully commodified contexts, a significant share of total social labour goes into the production of use values that never acquire an exchange value, insofar as they are consumed by the immediate producers themselves or otherwise distributed according to non-mercantile logics. Arguably, these two filters in between the reality of production and its statistical depiction affect agricultural output, and rural economic activity more generally, disproportionately, with the likely statistical underrepresentation of this sector as a result.

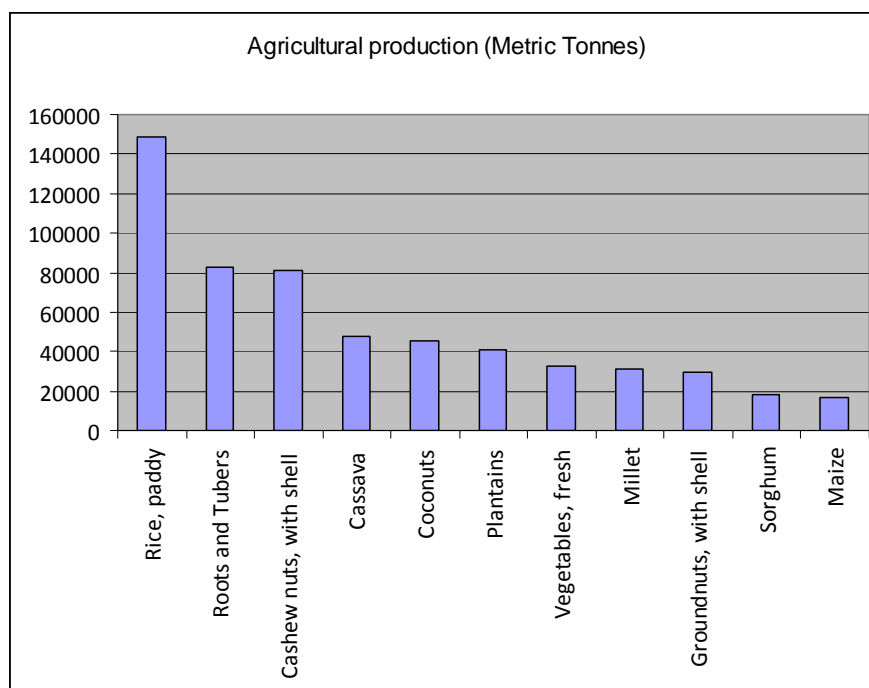
<sup>53</sup> Source: WBDI (<http://data.worldbank.org/data-catalog/world-development-indicators>).

<sup>54</sup> Due to widespread informality (in the sense of lack of formal registration), this of course constitutes an underrepresentation of the actual size of the business fabric. However, this shows very clearly the diminutive size of the formal, modern sector of the Bissau-Guinean economy.

<sup>55</sup> Source: author's calculations based on data from MEDR (2009).

<sup>56</sup> An estimated 130 Kg of rice are consumed on average per person per year and these, on average, account for 65% of the total calorie intake (MEPIR 2010:9).

however, it is complemented to a varying extent by the production of other food crops: other cereals such as millet, maize and sorghum; cassava and other tubers; and garden vegetables (MEPIR 2010; PNUD 2006). Guinea-Bissau was once a net exporter of rice, but population growth, the destruction and deterioration of rice paddies and the increasing commodification of subsistence reversed that situation<sup>57</sup>. In recent years, rice production has once again picked up, stimulated by the declining terms of trade of cashew nuts for rice and by localised efforts by the government and development agencies to stimulate domestic production. Between 2006 and 2008, for example, officially recorded rice production experienced a massive increase, from 106,000 to around 150,000 tonnes<sup>58</sup>. However, this has not yet proven enough to ensure self-sufficiency at the national level: in the 2009/2010 season, the country is estimated to have imported around 20% (or 40,000 tonnes) of its total rice consumption (about 200,000 tonnes) (MEPIR 2010:9).



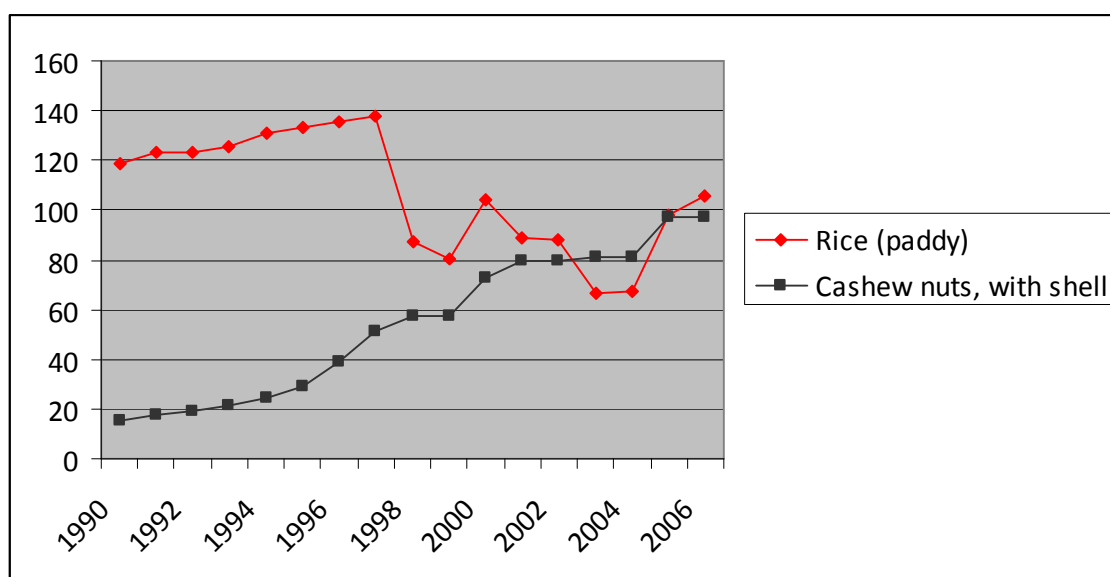
**Figure 6.3 Guinea-Bissau: Agricultural production, main crops, 2008 (metric tonnes)<sup>59</sup>**

<sup>57</sup> As cashew nut production swept the country from the 1980s onwards, many farmers withdrew from direct cultivation of rice, and instead started to rely more heavily on the barter of cashew nuts for rice, or the market sale of the former followed by the purchase of the latter. The flipside of the coin of this increase in the degree of market mediation of food provision was an absolute decrease in local rice production that only recently, and partly as a consequence of the drop in the terms of trade of cashew nuts for rice, began to be reversed (PNUD 2006; Interviews no.13 and 19).

<sup>58</sup> Source: FAOSTAT (<http://faostat.fao.org/site/339/default.aspx>)

<sup>59</sup> Source: FAOSTAT (<http://faostat.fao.org/site/339/default.aspx>)





**Figure 6.4 Guinea-Bissau: Paddy rice and cashew nut production, 1990-2006 (x1,000 metric tonnes)<sup>60</sup>**

Among the cash crops, the key role is played by cashew nuts – basically the country’s export monocrop and an extraordinary case-study in its own right (Lynn and Jaeger 2004; Barry *et al* 2007). Cashew trees are well adapted to the natural conditions in Guinea-Bissau and were already common in the colonial era (Mendes 1969), but it was not until the late 1980s that they began systematically to take over an increasing share of the country’s land area, and that their planting and harvesting took on a central role among the livelihood strategies of rural Bissau-Guineans (Barry *et al* 2007). From then onwards, the output of this crop has consistently kept on the increase, driven both by the expansion of the area taken up by cashew groves and by the growth and maturation of the trees over time. This astonishing expansion – to the point of the country as a whole having been described as “effectively a cashew farm” (Lynn and Jaeger 2004:1) – was triggered by explicit government and donor support to the exploitation of what was perceived to be the country’s ‘comparative advantage’ given the high international price of cashew nuts in the 1980s. It also benefited from the relative abundance of land amenable to clearing and planting of cashew groves, from the limited labour intensity of cashew nut production and from the fact that the seasonality of cashew harvesting is quite compatible with that of paddy rice cultivation<sup>61</sup>.

<sup>60</sup> Source: Ministry of Agriculture, Government of Guinea-Bissau.

<sup>61</sup> The cashew harvesting season takes place roughly between March and May, whereas the annual cycle of work in the rice paddies begins during the rain season (June-October) and ends around January, by which time all the rice will typically have grown and been harvested. The conservation

The total area currently taken up by cashew groves adds up to around 200,000 hectares (Said and Abreu 2011) – about four fifths of the total area taken up by permanent crops, and more than one third of the country's sum of arable area and permanent crops<sup>62</sup>. Even more tellingly, cashew nuts accounted in 2009 for about 80% of the country's total export earnings (BCEAO 2009), and the tax on cashew exports constitutes an important source of public finance. Additionally, there is a remarkably low degree of concentration of tenure as far as cashew plantations are concerned – with an average size of a mere 1.6 hectares enabling a significant share of rural Bissau-Guinean households to earn a part of their monetary income directly from the sale of this product (Said and Abreu 2011:14).

Not everything has been good news as far as cashew nuts are concerned, however. First, as already mentioned, the high price of cashew nuts at the outset of the 'cashew cycle' encouraged monospecialisation and the shift from food-cropping to cash-cropping, leading to a decline in domestic food crop production – especially rice. Additionally, the greater seasonal 'redundancy' of rural labour that arose as a consequence of the dissemination and characteristics of this crop definitely contributed to increasing rural-urban migration. In its turn, this fed back upon rice production, particularly as the 'rural exodus' of many young and able members of many communities made it more difficult to undertake large-scale community works like the construction and maintenance of the main dykes that protect the paddies from the sea water.

These changes in strategies hinged to a significant extent on the income derived from cashew, however, and the latter has experienced a downward trend in the international market ever since the beginning of the 'cashew cycle' in Guinea-Bissau (Barry *et al* 2007:81). Although this has so far been largely offset by the increase in the volume of cashew nut production, this price decline, alongside an arguably overvalued currency<sup>63</sup>, has been eroding the terms of trade faced by individual households, as well as, at the macro level, the country's ability to pay for imports (including rice) through the export of cashew nuts. Indeed, Guinea-Bissau's overall terms of trade have deteriorated substantially over the last three decades, to a large extent reflecting the declining international price of cashew nuts (Figure 7.5). As a consequence of all of this, it has by now become clear that

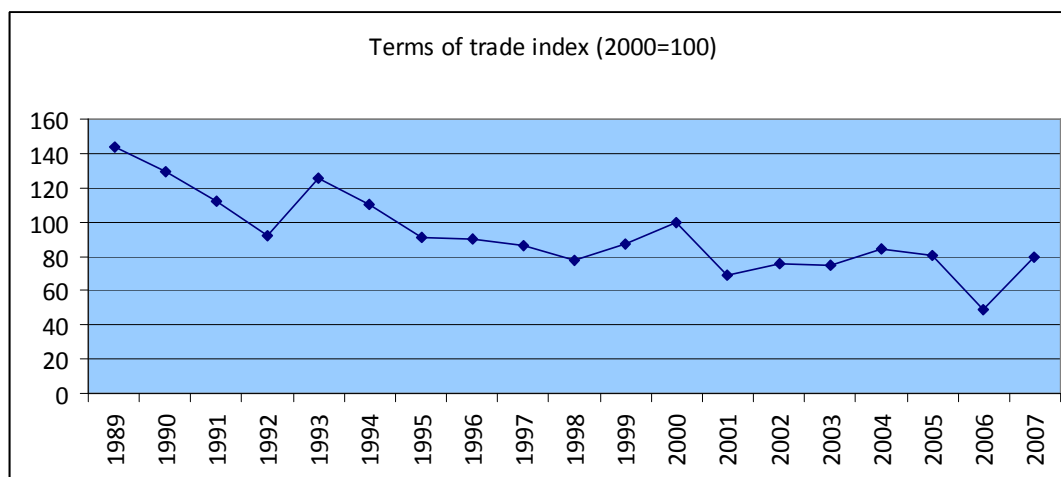
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and reparation of the rice-paddy dykes takes place throughout the year, but is largely compatible with cashew harvesting.

<sup>62</sup> <http://faostat.fao.org/site/405/default.aspx>

<sup>63</sup> Since 1997, Guinea-Bissau has adopted the CFA franc, which is issued by the Banque Centrale des États de l'Afrique de l'Ouest, backed by the French Treasury and circulates in eight West African countries. The CFA franc has been pegged to the Euro at the fixed rate of 1 Eur = 655.957 CFA since 1994, which, for example, has implied an appreciation by 20% vis-à-vis the US dollar since 1999.

excessive dependence upon cashew (and upon market mediation for the purpose of food provision) is a dangerous strategy, especially for poorer Bissau-Guinean households, and it is partly as a result of the acknowledgement of this that rice cultivation has recently become the focus of renewed attention.



**Figure 6.5 Guinea-Bissau: Terms of trade, 1989-2007 (index: 2000=100)<sup>64</sup>**

Another fundamental problem with Guinea-Bissau's participation in the cashew value chain resides in the failure so far to move up the chain by engaging in the processing of cashew nuts to a more significant extent. As of 2009, around thirty small cashew-processing units were either operating in Guinea-Bissau or in the process of being set up, but in spite of that only 2.5% of that year's harvest was actually processed in Guinea-Bissau (George *et al* 2010). Additionally, the expansion of cashew groves in the last three decades was not, generally speaking, accompanied by any sort of agronomic rationalisation or scientific improvement: as a consequence, in many areas cashew trees were planted too close together, resulting in lower yields over time and greater vulnerability to plagues and diseases (Barry *et al* 2007:81).

Cashew nuts are, by far, the country's leading cash crop. Depending on the region, however, other crops are produced for the supra-local market – destined both for Bissau and the rest of the territory. These include sweet potatoes in the area around Bambadinca; groundnuts in the Eastern hinterland; sugar cane in a number of commercial farms/distilleries around the country; and palm kernels, palm oil, coconuts, bananas and other fruits in most coastal and island areas (see Figure 7.3). However, the key differences

<sup>64</sup> Source: WBDI (<http://databank.worldbank.org>)

consist in the fact that the production of these latter crops is more localised than that of cashew nuts, and that they are not exported to any significant degree (MEDR 2009).

In terms of the organisation of production, the agricultural sector has been usefully described by Dias (1996:333) as comprising “four main types of agrarian systems: commercial farmers (*ponteiros*); producer cooperatives and associations; traditional farmers; and traditional agropastoralists”<sup>65</sup>. Commercial farmers consist of those who hold land concessions granted by the government, produce primarily for the market and rely primarily on wage labour – that is to say, theoretically the foremost candidates to constituting Guinea-Bissau’s version of modern, capitalist farming. Pereira *et al* (1992:15) and Barry *et al* (2007:79) both indicate the existence of some 2,200 such concessions, covering approximately 27% of the country’s arable land. However, these are misleading figures, for this is partly a fictional class. Pereira *et al*’s survey of the *ponteiros* in 1992 showed that about half of the parcels under concessions actually laid fallow (corresponding to 96% of the total area under concession), for many of these supposed commercial farmers did not farm at all. Rather, many seemingly constituted themselves as such in order to acquire land through clientelistic means for future real estate investments, and so as to access agricultural grants and credits from donors with the connivance of the government (Galli 1990:62-64). There is a need for more recent quantitative evidence on the current situation in this respect, but the general view is – and several of my informants<sup>66</sup> concur – that this has not changed significantly in the meantime: the actual size and importance of commercial agriculture is in reality much less than suggested by the total area formally assigned to supposed commercial farmers.

Producer cooperatives are an important but still limited arrangement in Guinea-Bissau. In many cases, they have been created within the context of rural development projects undertaken by local NGOs, often with external funding and/or support. For the most part, their activities consist of agricultural extension services, provision of inputs, and assistance with, or the coordination of, the commercialisation of specific farm products. Systematic studies are lacking on the total number of cooperatives, the total number of producer members and the scale of farming operations undertaken within these

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<sup>65</sup> This classification is based on a twin criterion: the first two “systems” are distinguished by their property and social-productive relations as well as their relatively higher degree of formality, whereas the latter two are variants of small independent production at the local level, set apart by agroecological and technical criteria (large-scale animal husbandry being integrated with agriculture in the “agropastoralist” case).

<sup>66</sup> Interviews no.13 and 16.

arrangements. However, an assessment conducted in 2010 for the World Food Programme identified an average of 8-12 such cooperative arrangements in each of Guinea-Bissau's seven rural and mostly continental regions (i.e. excluding Bolama-Bijagós and Bissau)<sup>67</sup>. Most are limited in their operations, encompassing only one or a few villages in each case, but seven larger-scale cooperatives, or local NGOs with cooperative farming arrangements in place, were identified in the context of this study whose members numbered in the hundreds or thousands<sup>68</sup>. Producer cooperatives constitute an important and promising avenue for the intensification of production and the attainment of economies of scale in Guinea-Bissau, not least given the lack of government extension services and the general failure of capitalist agriculture to take hold. However, they still encompass only a minority of rural producers and, crucially, their effect largely consists in the alleviation of specific constraints, or the introduction of specific improvements, in the context of specific farming activities undertaken by what remain largely independent smallholder farmers.

The remaining two types of agrarian systems according to Dias' (1996) classification are those that account for the bulk of Bissau-Guinean agriculture: "traditional farmers" and "traditional agropastoralists". These can in fact be subsumed under a larger, common category: relatively independent smallholders cultivating parcels allocated through customary tenurial rights and practices. Dias' classification seeks to stress the productivity advantage enjoyed by the agropastoralists in the eastern part of the country, not least by virtue of their recourse to animal traction in agriculture. However, a much more detailed and probably unsurpassed (if by now perhaps somewhat outdated) taxonomy of Bissau-Guinean agronomic patterns in that respect is that put forth by Hochet (1983), who identified as many as 19 distinct types of "agricultural family units" in the country – based on differences in terms of technical relations of production and social-productive arrangements. This variability of social-productive arrangements within small independent production has crucial implications for productivity, inequality and the pace of social differentiation, as shall be seen in the village-level case-study chapters (Chapters 7 and 8, below). For our current purposes, however, it is more important to stress their common features: small, relatively independent production, based on customary tenure and right of use, relying on labour-intensive techniques, with most labour allocation taking place outside the labour market.

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<sup>67</sup> Personal communication with Mr. Israel Krug, consultant to the WFP, on 4 April 2010.

<sup>68</sup> See previous footnote.

Taken together, small farmers were recently estimated to comprise around 90,000 households, with an average farm size per household of less than 3 hectares (Barry *et al* 2007:79). This reflects the very scattered character of land tenure in Guinea-Bissau, which is itself a consequence of the relative abundance of the land and of the lack of any process of expropriation 'from above'. Relative land abundance is illustrated by the fact that of the 2.8 million hectares that make up the country's land area, only 250,000 are taken up by permanent crops, and another 300,000 by temporary crops, meadows and pastures, kitchen gardens or temporarily fallow. A full 2 million hectares (or 70% of the total land area) are classified by FAO as forest area, and in many cases are to be found at a relatively short distance from villages, susceptible to clearing and subsequent conversion to permanent or temporary crops<sup>69</sup>. That does not mean that all forest land is without a customary owner, whether at the individual or community level, and that it is up for grabs. Rather, the allocation of land is usually administered at the community level, through inheritance and other modes of allocation or transmission. However, the way in which this has taken place in the past has effectively ensured a wide dispersion of tenure and access – though not necessarily for some subordinate groups in society (female and migrant households being a case in point), whose access to the land (especially good-quality irrigated land) is usually more difficult and precarious (World Bank 2006:18-19).

Besides agriculture, Guinea-Bissau's primary sector comprises several important sub-sectors, but these have a significantly less central role in the structures of both output and exports. Forestry is undertaken in a predominantly artisan way, involving the gathering and transformation of a variety of palm products (palm kernels, palm oil, palm wine, soap, etc.), as well as of multiple other forest products used for traditional pharmaceutical and ceremonial purposes. Commercial logging takes place, but has residual importance: timber accounted for less than 2% of the total value of exports in 2006-2009 (BCEAO 2009) and the share of GDP accounted for by forestry in 2003-2008 never exceeded 2% either (MEDR 2009). Fisheries have great potential and major macroeconomic significance, but their impact is made manifest mainly upon the government budget, through the concession of fishing licenses to foreign fishing fleets (George *et al* 2010b), rather than through domestic production and exports: fisheries did not account for more than an estimated 5% of GDP in 2008, the vast majority of which corresponded to artisan (as opposed to industrial) fishing (MEDR 2009). At the artisan level, fishing is typically a complementary activity, rather than

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<sup>69</sup> <http://faostat.fao.org/site/405/default.aspx>

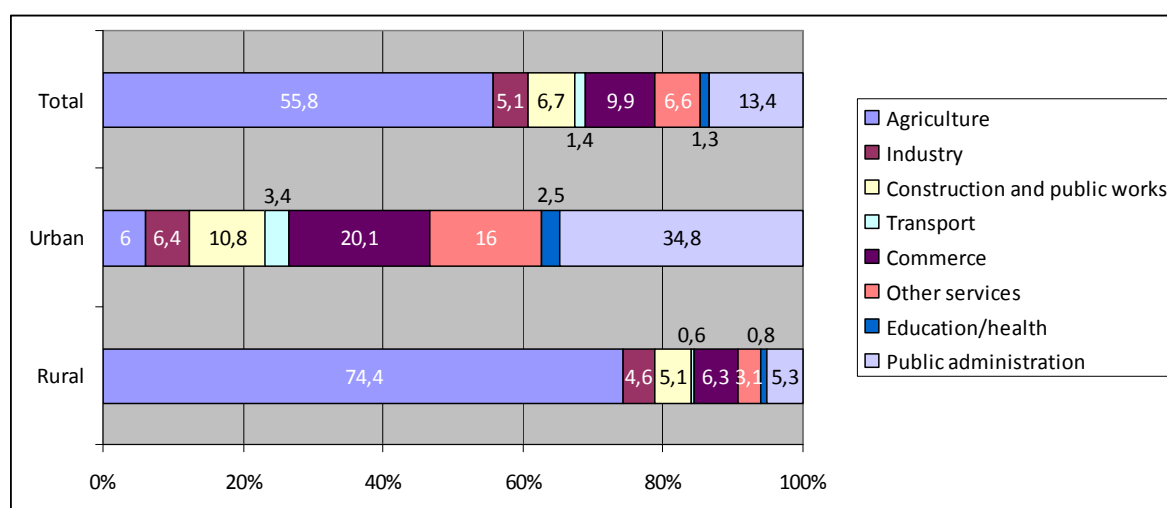
the main one: the FAO Fishery Country Profile<sup>70</sup> cites a 1996 study that found that fishing was the main activity for only 18% of the people who engaged in fishing in Guinea-Bissau, compared to 78% in the case of agriculture. Said and Abreu (2011) found evidence to this effect even in the Bijagós archipelago, where fishing might have been expected to play the central role. The weight of fisheries in domestic output is, in fact, quite similar to that of cattle-raising (4% in 2008: *id ibid*), reflecting the similitude of the roles and characteristics of these two activities (i.e. largely based on relatively small producers for whom these are more often than not complementary activities).

Guinea-Bissau has significant oil and mineral resources, including phosphates and bauxite reserves, but only recently did prospecting and extracting licenses begin to be granted by the government. These have been mostly issued to foreign firms: there is negligible domestic extracting activity (MEDR 2009) and it is likely that whatever economic effect this sector will have in the future will be felt through royalties and fees, which may well rival or surpass those from fisheries. The struggle over the ability to exert political control over these rents, as we have already mentioned, will almost certainly have important political consequences, but direct demand and employment linkages with the domestic economy will in all likelihood be few and far between.

As a whole, the secondary sector represents an estimated 13% of GDP (in 2008: MEDR 2009). This is mostly accounted for by food processing and, to a lesser extent, construction. However, the significance and potential of the food processing industry should not be overstated. First, its estimated quantitative weight probably reflects the statistical difficulty of separating this particular subsector from agriculture. Second, this is an industry that only caters to the domestic market: the 2003-2009 foreign trade data, for example, show virtually no exports of processed foods (MEDR 2009). Moreover, as we have seen, the overwhelming majority of the country's key cash crop is exported unprocessed. The secondary sector is also of clearly secondary importance as far as employment is concerned, reflecting the small number of firms, the small scale of production and the lack of industrial diversification: we find that manufacturing accounts for a mere 5% of total employment – and scarcely more than that (6.4%) in the case of the urban areas where industry is expected to concentrate.

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<sup>70</sup> [http://www.fao.org/fishery/countrysector/FI-CP\\_GW/en](http://www.fao.org/fishery/countrysector/FI-CP_GW/en)



**Figure 6.6 Guinea-Bissau: Sectoral structure of employment (main activity)<sup>71</sup>**

The last macro sector to be addressed in this subsection consists of services, which contribute an estimated 40% of GDP (MEDR 2009; See Figure 6.2) and account for an estimated 30% of employment<sup>72</sup> (Figure 6.6). Within this sector, we can usefully single out four key subsectors. The first consists of the public administration, civil service and military – in other words, formal and largely urban-based occupations and activities supported by the government budget. The second corresponds to the incipient modern private sector, within which petrol distribution, hotels and restaurants, telecommunications, and banking and finance predominate. There is significant presence of foreign capital in all of the latter branches of activity, but in most cases their operations take place on a relatively small scale, due to the small size of the Bissau-Guinean market and other economic and institutional constraints: the financial sector, for example, accounted for a mere 0.5% of GDP in 2003-2008 (MEDR 2009). The third category consists of petty services, a hugely diverse constellation of activities that includes all those typically subsumed in the ‘informal’ sector (cleaning, peddling, loading, driving, weaving, etc.: see next subsection), which constitute a central source of livelihood for most urban Bissau-Guineans and a complementary one for many rural dwellers. Finally, the fourth category consists of traders organised in networks. Commerce, which accounts for around one fifth of GDP (id ibid), is a robust and well-structured sector in which importers, exporters, distributors and retailers are organized into multi-scalar and usually co-ethnic networks that reach out to every

<sup>71</sup> Estimation based on 2002 Light Household Survey. Source: World Bank (2006:32).

<sup>72</sup> These employment figures are provided in order to illustrate the main features, but their validity and reliability is limited and they need to be read with caution: in a context where there is widespread multi-activity and multi-locality, it is particularly difficult (and potentially misleading) to pigeon-hole survey respondents into such clear-cut and mutually exclusive activities, and infer from there.



corner of the country<sup>73</sup>. Altogether, this group holds a significant share of the country's capital – indeed, it plays a more significant role in the provision of credit than the formal banking sector<sup>74</sup>. The fact that these networks command a significant portion of the country's capital, cover virtually the entire territory and have solid transnational linkages (namely across West Africa and in Europe) turn them into particularly interesting candidates to furthering the modernisation of production, but so far that does not seem to have been the case. We shall return to this issue further on in this thesis.

All in all, the structure of the Bissau-Guinean economy is fairly typical of a poor and largely agrarian developing country: agriculture is predominant in both output and employment, there is very little manufacturing and the public sector accounts for most of employment in the third sector. The modern private sector is almost insignificant in agriculture and still incipient in the service sector. Instead, it is smallholder primary production that constitutes the first link in the chain that, especially through cashew nuts, fully integrates the country in the world economy. Also involved in this chain are the commercial networks mentioned above, which play a key role and appropriate margins over both the country's export monocrop and the provision to the population of a large share of the means of subsistence. It is inside this general structure that, depending on their setting, rural and urban Bissau-Guineans adopt different livelihood strategies, reflecting different combinations of social-productive arrangements.

#### *6.2.2 Livelihood strategies and social-productive arrangements*

The diversification of livelihood strategies is an extremely widespread feature of Bissau-Guinean households and constitutes a key coping strategy in the face of low and uncertain output and income levels (Gacitua-Mario *et al* 2007; World Bank 2006a:43). Generally speaking, most rural households combine, in varying proportions, primary production for the household's own consumption and simple commodity production, to which many add (usually casual) wage employment. In their turn, urban households typically engage in a variety of petty income-generating activities of a more or less independent character (depending on the cases), counting themselves fortunate when one or more household members have been able to secure stable employment in the public or modern private

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<sup>73</sup> These trading networks and individuals are especially associated with two immigrant communities (the Lebanese and the Mauritanian) and with the Fula of Guinea-Bissau and the Republic of Guinea (see also Chapter 9), which occupy overlapping but slightly different niches. Indians play an especially prominent role in the large-scale purchase and export of cashew nuts.

<sup>74</sup> Namely, through advances on the purchase of cashew nuts to local producers.

sectors. Additionally, migrant remittances constitute an important source of monetary income throughout the country, and especially in the case of Bissau and the northern and eastern regions (see section 6.3, below). In the meantime, rural and urban households are anything but clear-cut groups, for multilocality itself constitutes a common livelihood strategy: temporary migration to work in urban areas is a common practice by members of rural households in relatively more accessible areas, as is intra-rural migration in search of agricultural employment by poorer households. Moreover, it is common for urban households to grow vegetable gardens in peri-urban areas<sup>75</sup>, for example, or to have some of their members participate in the cashew harvesting season – in their own groves, in those of relatives or as wage-labourers.

Rural Bissau-Guinean households are often presented as relying primarily on subsistence agriculture (Gacitua-Mario *et al* 2007:60). Whatever the region, however, rural households in general undertake much more than just agriculture: coastal and riverside communities engage in fishing; those within or in the vicinity of forest areas extract and explore forest products; cattle-raising is practiced around the country and especially in the Eastern hinterland (id *ibid*:61-62); and everywhere people engage in commerce and perform a variety of petty services to each other. On the other hand, the terms “subsistence farming” and “subsistence agriculture” (indeed like “family farming” or “peasant farming”) are too overarching and vague, at least from a historical materialist perspective, to cast much light on some key aspects. Concealed behind or within them are the concrete ways in which production is organised within rural households, their underlying property relations (most crucially, with respect to the land) and how it is that the surplus is appropriated or distributed (Bernstein 2003).

In rather abstract terms, we can identify four main types of rural social-productive arrangements in the Bissau-Guinean context, present in articulation with each other to varying degrees across households in the same community, and across communities and regions. These are: i) non-commodified production, typically for consumption within the household; ii); simple commodity production, i.e. relying on the household’s own resources but destined for the market; iii) tributary arrangements based on non-mercantile norms and logics; and iv) (proto-capitalist) wage labour. Few households can be neatly placed into one of these categories: the most common situation is for a household to be involved in

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<sup>75</sup> According to Gacitua-Mario *et al* (2007:64), as many as 30% of urban households practice small garden agriculture, covering between 60% and 80% of their demand for fresh vegetables throughout the year.

two or more of them, depending on the surrounding social structure, the household's own place within that structure, customs, norms and the household's own decisions. All of these aspects co-determine the households' subsequent trajectory and social mobility, as well as the dynamics of the community and the social formation as a whole.

A narrower understanding of subsistence farming that does prove more useful corresponds to the production of non-commodified use-values, i.e. goods and services for the household's own consumption or in order to be exchanged according to a logic of reciprocity<sup>76</sup>. More often than not, this concerns more than agriculture – artisan fishing, small-scale cattle-raising and forestry are all commonly practiced by many rural Bissau-Guineans in order to obtain products that are, in part or in whole, to be consumed within the household. This is most significant at the household (rather than communal) level, but community-level reciprocal logics are also quite widespread, sometimes taking on a religious-ceremonial character. In that sense, the latter cannot be neatly distinguished from tributary arrangements, which typically also take on a similar character (see below). To a lesser or larger extent, such non-commodified production is almost universal: the overwhelming majority of rural Bissau-Guinean households produce at least some food (rice, garden vegetables, maize, fish, palm oil, etc.) and other use-values for its own consumption and/or to be exchanged according to non-mercantile logics.

However, most rural households also produce for the local and/or supra-local market. Simple commodity production is most common in cashew production, which links these rural households directly with the world economy insofar as it is a cash crop destined almost exclusively for export: an estimated 67% of all rural households engage in the harvesting of cashew nuts (AEDES 2009). In many contexts, particularly in especially remote areas (like the deep South or more isolated island areas), cashew is more commonly bartered for imported rice and other products than sold for money. However, simple commodity production is not limited to cashew – almost any other product is susceptible to being exchanged as a commodity, particularly in the local market and whenever the household's output of that product exceeds its requirements. Thus, there is no obvious distinction between simple commodity production and simple non-commodified

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<sup>76</sup> In this categorisation and for the sake of exposition, we have chosen to analytically separate tributary non-mercantile arrangements from the other non-mercantile arrangements of the type mentioned above (for the household's own consumption and to be exchanged on the basis of reciprocity).

production: in many cases, we are talking about the same activities, undertaken in the same way, differing only in terms of what use is made of the output.

Tributary arrangements, too, can be found in many Bissau-Guinean rural communities, although their significance has become increasingly symbolic and residual. Two main types of tributary arrangements can be identified: (i) those involving the payment or performance of tribute by certain age groups to older age groups; and (ii) those involving the payment or performance of tribute to chieftains in the context of “vertically-organised societies” with a nobility (Lopes 1987). The former are most prevalent in the case of the “horizontal” Animist communities of the coast, who are organised into age groups with strictly defined rights and duties that include the performance of tribute labour by young adults to the benefit of elders (sometimes for a period of months). These arrangements, which are governed by customary norms and take on ceremonial significance, can hardly be said to constitute a mechanism generating or reinforcing social differentiation, however – instead, they should be more correctly perceived as a social security mechanism implemented at the community level (Said and Abreu 2011). In their turn, tributary arrangements to the benefit of chieftains and dominant classes were in the past an important feature of Guinea-Bissau’s Islamised class-based societies (the Fula and the Mandinga), as well as of those characterised as having an “intermediate level” of class-based hierarchy (like the Manjaco) (Lopes 1987). In all of these cases, however, the significance of these practices has waned significantly, particularly as a consequence of State repression in the colonial and post-independence eras (Gable 2003). The chieftancy institution remains in existence in most of these areas and in some cases involves the occasional payment of tribute in the form of both goods and labour. However, it is clear that the share of total social labour that takes place in the context of these arrangements is small even in those areas where it is still a reality, and that it does not constitute a significant or constraining form of surplus appropriation<sup>77</sup>.

The remaining key component in rural Guinea-Bissau’s constellation of social-productive arrangements is (proto-)capitalist wage labour. In purely abstract terms, properly capitalist wage labour involves the buying and selling of labour-power in the

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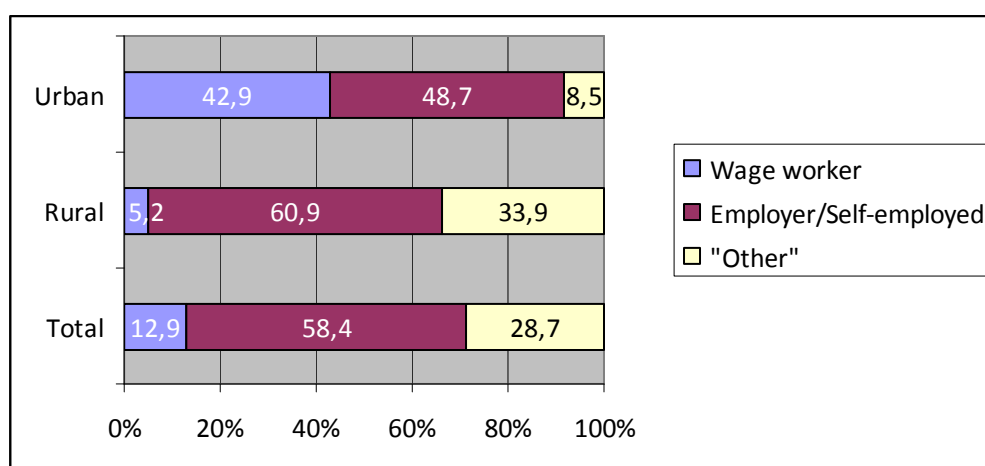
<sup>77</sup> In the case of the two case-study villages discussed in chapters 7 and 8 (below), which can probably be regarded as relatively representative in this respect, we find that tribute is indeed residual. In Caiomete, tribute labour performed for the benefit of the local and regional chieftains concerns a maximum of three or four days of annual labour (more usually, just one or two), to which adds tribute in the form of goods (like animal body parts) when certain ceremonies are undertaken. In the case of Braima Sori, no evidence was found of tribute labour.

context of commodity production, but most actual labour-hiring relations in the rural Bissau-Guinean context violates one or more of these criteria – either because it is the workers’ labour (not labour-power) that is most commonly purchased (when workers are paid to perform specific tasks) and because most of the time the process does not serve to valorise what is subsequently to become a commodity (rather, it creates a use-value for the benefit of the labour-purchasing household). In this sense, few of these paid labour relations assume a properly capitalist character – often, we are instead effectively dealing with simple commodity production of goods and services, at times reflecting limited specialisation (e.g. when someone is hired to build a fence). The distinction between simple commodity production of this kind and proto-capitalist wage labour is, again, not clear-cut: the same people can be hired to perform several different tasks, of which only a part involves an element of surplus extraction and subsequent realisation. In any case, as a general conclusion, the limited character of capitalist wage labour which obtains in this context is a consequence of the fact that only a minor share of total social labour is actually hired, and that only a minor share of that which is hired serves to valorise commodities.

The last few paragraphs make it clear that rural Guinea-Bissau is characterised by a complex co-existence of different social-productive arrangements. Straddling and diversification – of crops, activities and productive arrangements – is the norm for rural Bissau-Guinean households. This reflects the fact that most households own the means to ensure their own livelihood (however close to the subsistence threshold this may be), but also have a keen interest in taking advantage of any available opportunities to improve their food security and living standards in what is usually a near-subsistence context. In fact, the same can be said about most urban households, which also tend to spread their bets across a variety of activities: stable wage employment for those who can access it, but also all sorts of ‘informal’ petty activities – some undertaken in accordance with a logic of simple commodity production, others in the context of larger operations involving casual hiring (e.g. taxi drivers, porters, security guards, commerce, etc.).

In contexts where multiactivity (and multilocality) are quite widespread, it is particularly hard – if not spurious – to seek to rigorously quantify the relative importance of the various social-productive arrangements (or the different “employment status”: Figure 6.7). Instead, the ability to properly understand the role and importance of each of those arrangements requires close examination of the concrete contexts (as attempted in chapters 8 and 9, below). Data like those presented in the Figure below, which seek to unequivocally ascribe individuals to one category only, are inevitably imprecise and entail a

significant loss of information. Still, if read against the background of what has been argued above, these data can still be used to illustrate some of the general features that we have been referring to. For example, an aspect which is immediately apparent is the secondary importance of wage labour, especially in rural contexts (where “wage workers” reportedly account for 5% of the labour force). Obviously, the vast majority of those represented here as “employer/self-employed” are indeed ‘self-employed’ smallholder producers, but presumably so are most of those subsumed under the residual category “other”, which more than anything else reflects the inadequacy of the survey categories. In any case, these data are presented here because, for all their deficiencies, they constitute an example of the available attempts at quantification of this matter based on national-level surveys, and serve to illustrate some of the arguments put forth above.



**Figure 6.7 Guinea-Bissau: Employment status of the economically active population (rural, urban and total)<sup>78</sup>**

The scarcity of reliable quantitative data does not prevent us from safely reaching the key conclusions presented thus far. This is a predominantly non-capitalist social formation that is fully integrated in a capitalist world economy. Several different logics co-exist and articulate with each other, but nevertheless gravitate around a substantial core of simple independent production – especially in the rural areas where most people live. The predominantly non-capitalist character of production significantly accounts for the relative stagnation of the social formation. There have been some important changes over the last few decades, including the increasing turn to cashew production; increasing market mediation between production and consumption; and the expansion and development of

<sup>78</sup> Estimation based on 2002 Light Household Survey. Source: World Bank 2006.

an urban sector revolving around trade and the public sector. However, the livelihoods of most rural households have not fundamentally changed, reliant as they remain on independent smallholder production combined with whatever income-generating opportunities may be advantageously taken advantage of. In view of all this, what can we say, then, about the reasons for the relative failure of the transition to capitalism to occur?

### *6.2.3 Obstacles to capitalist development*

The fact that the organisation of production in Guinea-Bissau is predominantly non-capitalist reflects the failure so far of the transition to capitalism to occur – in Byres' (1996) formulation, either "from above" or "from below" –, due to a number of historical reasons and factors. This section highlights and briefly discusses those reasons and factors.

In exceedingly simple and schematic terms (and as we have seen in Chapter 3, above), the transition to generalised commodity production with generalised recourse to wage labour requires either the endogenous transformation of the existing class structure such that a local bourgeoisie and proletariat crystallise; or the penetration of capital from the outside in contexts where, by virtue of politically-induced processes of separation of the producers from the means of production, the latter are economically coerced into entering into the wage labour-capital relation. In Guinea-Bissau, both of these processes have failed to occur – in fact, they were more often than not politically constrained – throughout the country's colonial and post-colonial trajectory. Considering in particular Guinea-Bissau's agrarian base, we find that throughout colonialism, post-independence developmentalism and liberalisation, the rural sector has consistently found itself between a rock and a hard place: on the one hand, it has consistently been subject to various mercantile mechanisms of surplus appropriation that have stood in the way of endogenous agrarian accumulation and upward differentiation from below; on the other hand, this has been accompanied throughout by various forms of agrarian populism that have protected local producers from proletarianisation and discouraged the penetration of agrarian capital from the outside.

The economic rationale underlying the Portuguese colonial enterprise in (then) Portuguese Guinea was one based on the realisation of mercantile profits, relying on the imposition of mandatory crops, the attempt to monopolise trade and the ability to depress producer prices, but not on the direct mobilisation and control over labour in the context of the agricultural labour process. As argued by Galli (1995:73), the Portuguese colonial

administration's corporatist ideology managed to combine the defence of the interests of metropolitan financial capital with the "paternalistic" preservation of 'indigenous traditional farming' from the effects, regarded as pernicious, of the introduction of direct economic exploitation. As a consequence of this, not only was the level of investment that was channelled into infrastructural development and the intensification of agriculture extremely limited, but labour and land laws were also designed or maintained so as to maintain the agrarian *status quo* (id *ibid*). If there was an obvious adversary to the colonial administration's political-economic strategy, it consisted of those relatively wealthier local actors whose claims on the surplus drove a wedge between metropolitan mercantile profits and the ability of smallholder producers to subsist: the various layers of local small traders, on the one hand, and the incipient local commercial farmers (often of Creole or Cape Verdean background), on the other (id *ibid*).

Somewhat ironically, the post-independence developmental regime adopted a similar strategy, the main difference being that the extraction of surplus was not meant for metropolitan export, but rather to fuel the emergence and development of an urban-industrial sector. Control over commercialisation circuits was even more thorough than in the colonial past, implying the systematic undermining of the ability to accumulate on the part of traders, and effectively combined the preservation of the agrarian organisation of production with systematic surplus extraction through the compression of agricultural prices. Not only did this further consolidate the stagnation of agricultural activity, but it was also unsuccessful in its own terms by virtue of the failure of any meaningful industrial activity to take off and viably sustain itself – eventually leading to insurmountable financial difficulties that paved the way to donor-driven market-oriented liberalisation (Galli 1990).

The third major cycle in the recent history of Guinea-Bissau's economic policy orientation (liberalisation) removed some of the strangleholds that had characterised the previous two cycles (mercantile colonialism and 'urban-biased' developmentalism): in particular, much greater opportunities arose for the realisation of mercantile profits on the part of local traders. However, the agrarian development strategy that was adopted was, once again, one based on smallholder populism, only in this case in the context of the neoliberal Washington Consensus: explicit encouragement was provided to the country's specialisation in cashew production (given its perceived comparative advantage), to which a majority of rural smallholders gradually adhered, but expenditure cuts and the reduction in government involvement meant that infrastructural development and rural extension activities were further reduced. Additionally, the country's pattern of agricultural



productive specialisation, rather than enabling a substantial inflow of revenue that might have enabled endogenous accumulation, locked rural smallholders in the production of a small number of crops (especially cashew) that not only have experienced a downward trend in their long-run international price ever since but are also characterised by oligopsonic market structures, with only a handful of mostly foreign companies controlling producer prices and exerting significant political leverage in Guinea-Bissau (WFP 2011:38-39). As a consequence, we find the same pattern all over again: the systematic extraction of surplus through mercantile means preventing the upward differentiation of the more successful local producers; the lack of involvement 'from above' in the infrastructural and organisational upgrading of agricultural production; and the attempt, however minimal, to sustain the viable subsistence of rural smallholders through the provision of basic public services and sporadic emergency interventions.

The failure of a generalised capitalist transition to occur in Guinea-Bissau is thus the historical product of a series of successive economic policy orientations that, for all their differences, in fact shared some central common features: most crucially, the lack of investment in infrastructural and agrarian development, alongside implicit connivance with, or direct undertaking of, systematic mercantile extraction of the surplus from agricultural activity. The effect of all of this has been to preserve the existing agrarian organisation of production and its associated class structure, in a way that, to this day, has continued to prevent the modernisation of production and sustained productivity increases.

Turning to the present and against this general background, it is clear that the prospects of an "American route" transition to capitalism in Guinea-Bissau remain constrained by numerous factors that stand in the way of the endogenous upward differentiation of a local agrarian bourgeoisie. First, the poor level of infrastructural development, as apparent in the poor road infrastructure, extremely limited access to electrical power, lack of storage and conservation facilities and lack of agricultural extension services. Second, the impact on the cost structure of such factors as the comparatively high harbour dues in Bissau harbour, the frequent need to pay bribes at roadside checkpoints and a structure of taxation that disproportionately falls upon exports<sup>79</sup>. Third, the small size of the domestic market and the difficulty of competing against cheaper imports – given the other disadvantages mentioned in this paragraph and

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<sup>79</sup> Interview no.10.

the political decision not to protect domestic staple food production through tariffs<sup>80</sup>. Fourth, the relative insecurity of tenure in relation to the ambiguous land regulations<sup>81</sup>. Fifth, the discouraging effect upon relatively fixed investments of a recent history of violent conflict and persistent political instability. And sixth, the difficulty, if not impossibility, of circumventing the oligopsonic appropriation of the agricultural surplus in the sphere of circulation, given the country's pattern of productive specialisation and the structure of the products' value chains<sup>82</sup>.

In addition to all of the above, it is clear that since the liberalising turn of the 1980s, there have been other, more profitable, pathways to accumulation in this context than capitalist production. At the level of the political and military elites, these have consisted in the access to legal and illegal rents and resources originating externally, from foreign aid to the proceeds from drugs-trafficking, as well as in the use of positions of power in order to benefit from government contracts or the dismantling of the state-owned sector. At a more 'grassroots' level, it is the engagement in trading and merchant activities, alongside investments in relatively small commercial enterprises in niches protected from foreign competition (like local transports) that have constituted the most attractive outlets for the investment of local capital, unencumbered as they are by the constraints to productive capitalism that we have indicated above.

Now, if the prospects of a transition to productive capitalism driven by domestic capital seem remote, those of it being catalysed through the penetration of foreign capital (e.g. through 'land grabs' for the purpose of agro-industrial activities or the delocalisation of industry) hardly seem more likely – obviously, for many of the same reasons. In recent times, there has been increasing interest in Guinea-Bissau on the part of foreign capital, which has entered such sectors as telecommunications, banking and finance or petrol distribution, in addition to playing the leading role in the currently incipient development of the mining sector. However, it is clear that these are all sectors that largely rely on the possibility to access monopolistic or oligopolistic rents, rather than on 'normal' surplus extraction based on the exploitation of local labour-power. For the time being and in the foreseeable future, the penetration by foreign capital in the Bissau-Guinean economy may be playing an important infrastructural role in some respects and constitute a considerable source of revenue to the government, but it still seems a long way from showing signs of

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<sup>80</sup> Interview no.6.

<sup>81</sup> Interview no.9.

<sup>82</sup> Interview no.13.

being willing or able to bring about generalised changes to the social organisation of production.

All in all, it is difficult to escape the conclusion that the productive modernisation and upgrading of the Bissau-Guinean economy are very seriously constrained on a number of different levels, with little current prospects of either domestic or foreign capital being capable of overcoming those constraints – particularly insofar as they are faced with opportunities to engage in more profitable, albeit less dynamic and modernising, activities. In such a relatively dismal context, what room is there for migration to bring about development? The next sections (and the subsequent chapters) contribute to addressing that question by providing an overview of the main historical and current features of migration within and from Guinea-Bissau, followed by an appraisal of some of its socioeconomic effects.

### **6.3 Migration**

#### *6.3.1 Migration within and from Guinea-Bissau: a brief historical overview*

Migration is a central and permanent feature of Guinea-Bissau's history. Indeed, the significance and diversity of historical population movements occurring in this territory could hardly constitute a more eloquent disproof of the myth of the immobility of 'pre-modern' societies (see Chapter 2, above). The lack of historical records makes it hard to precisely locate in historical time the original settlement of the territory by the various population groups that were eventually to split and recombine themselves to form the mosaic of Animist ethnic groups that are currently to be found in Guinea-Bissau, particularly in its coastal and island areas. However, there is agreement as to the fact that the area was already inhabited for many centuries or millennia by the time of the arrival (and warring expansion) of the two great peoples from the hinterland of the African continent that presently constitute the bulk of Guinea-Bissau's Muslim population: the Mandinga, or Malinke, whose presence is traced back to the 13th Century; and the Fula, or Fulani, who entered the territory in the 15th Century and eventually subjugated and converted several of the pre-existing groups (including the Mandinga, defeated at the Battle of Kansala in 1868 and subsequently converted: Pélissier 1989). The co-existence and interpenetration of Animist and Muslim cultural elements that characterises Guinea-

Bissau's population in the present is therefore itself a product of large-scale population movements, whereby pre-existing and relatively small Animist polities were effectively 'compressed' against the coast, and in some cases militarily and politically subjugated as well as acculturated, by the two aforementioned empires from the hinterland.

The arrival and founding of trading outposts by the Portuguese from the 16th Century onwards was another factor that brought about significant population recomposition and movement, as the autochthonous population often tended to congregate in the vicinity of those outposts in order to engage in trade and benefit from the available economic opportunities. In the particular case of the port and trading area at Geba, the conversion of many of those autochthonous people by the Portuguese effectively brought into existence a distinct sociocultural group – the *Cristãos de Geba*, or Geba Christians – that has persisted until the present day. It should be noted, in the meantime, that dispersal, relocation and cultural influence worked both ways, as shown by the example of the *lançados* – Portuguese traders who penetrated deep into the territory and became acculturated. Indeed, this process of hybridisation and mutual acculturation is what accounts for the emergence and development of a specifically Creole language and culture over the subsequent centuries (Nafafé 2007).

In the late 19th and early 20th Centuries (the period of the "scramble for Africa"), the attempt by the Portuguese to ensure effective colonial domination of the territory was pursued by waging 'pacification' campaigns against those local groups which opposed their domination, while relying on shifting alliances with others (Pélissier 1989). As highlighted by Carreira and Meireles in the mid-20th Century (1959), those wars, too, constituted a cause of population movements, as did the subsequent introduction of colonial taxes, forced labour and mandatory crops by the Portuguese colonial administration. Indeed, the migration by a significant share of the Balanta ethnic group from their 'original' homeland in the Oio region to the southern part of the country's territory from the 1890s onwards was driven by a scarcity of rice in the North that was itself a consequence of colonially-induced changes in the social organisation of farming brought on by mandatory groundnut cultivation (van der Ploeg 1990, Temudo 2009).

In the meantime, and as Carreira and Meireles also mention, permanent large-scale migration was not solely brought on by opportunities and disruptions introduced by foreign peoples and invading armies; rather, 'internal' factors such as the demographic pressure upon the land, the deterioration of the soils or the outcomes of political disputes in the

context of customary political structures were also typical root causes of migration that stretched well into the past (Carreira and Meireles 1959, Jao 2003). In addition, relatively short-distance temporary migration in the context of the agricultural cycle, whereby certain groups relocate to different areas in order to grow and harvest various crops during parts of the year, has also long been a feature of many coastal and island communities. Moreover, the Manjaco, Pepel and Mancanha have also long had a tradition of moving southward, eastward and to Bissau during the dry season, in order to seek non-agricultural employment and engage in other productive activities during the mostly idle part of the year as far as rice production is concerned (Cardoso 2002). In the East, pastoralist Fula communities remained semi-nomadic up until the 20th century and practiced transhumance extensively – a practice which has remained in existence, albeit to a less significant extent, to the present day (see Chapter 8, below).

Thus, the onset of colonialism proper, with its associated warfare and coercive changes to socioeconomic organisation, brought forth specific forms of internal mobility that merely superposed themselves upon, and modified, a secular tradition of temporary or permanent mobility for a variety of motives that was shared by virtually all the population groups inhabiting the territory. The mid-19th also saw the emergence of the first significant population movement outwards from the territory<sup>83</sup>: migration into Southern Senegal, mostly by people of the Manjaco and Mancanha ethnic groups, initially to work in groundnut plantations and to tap rubber, and subsequently also to undertake other activities like domestic work (Gable 2000, Jao 2003). These population movements were initially motivated by the demographically-induced pressure on the land and the proximity to Senegal, but later on also reflected the attempt to flee colonial ‘pacification’ and the constraints of colonial rule (Jao 2003), while often also constituting an attempt to pursue personal emancipation<sup>84</sup>.

Partly as a consequence of their seafaring experience as a coastal people, the Manjaco then went on to further consolidate and diversify this migratory current as they began to seek employment as sailors in French merchant vessels in increasing numbers, eventually leading to the settlement in France by the first intercontinental Manjaco pioneers in the early 20th Century and the subsequent sustained development of a Guinea-

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<sup>83</sup> Excluding relatively local mobility within the territory of those ethnic groups that straddle the Northern and Southern borders, like the Felupe (or Diolla) in the North or the Nalu and Sosso in the South. These have long taken place in order to visit family members and especially in the context of religious and initiation ceremonies (Interview no.1).

<sup>84</sup> Interview no.1.

Bissau–Senegal–France migration system (Carreiro 2011; see also Chapter 7, below)<sup>85</sup>. As a consequence of this and ever since that time, the substantial Manjaco community in France has tended to concentrate in harbour areas or in their vicinity – particularly Marseille, Bordeaux and the Le Havre-Paris corridor (GRDR 2010) –, even though most of these migrants and their descendants subsequently moved away from seafaring and took up very different jobs, including industrial jobs in the car manufacturing sector in significant numbers<sup>86</sup>.

The late colonial period saw further population uprooting and movement, largely as a consequence of the independence war from 1963 onwards. As the conflict swept the country, there was significant rural-urban migration to Bissau in order to escape the impact of war, initiating a process of accelerated urbanisation that, for different reasons, would then persist beyond independence (see below). Moreover, during the war and throughout the territory, many rural communities were voluntarily or coercively moved from one place to another by both the colonial and independence armies, in an effort to remove those communities from enemy control. Additionally, there was an increase in outward flows, with a view to fleeing both war itself and the intensification of political repression by the colonial administration, most of which took place into Senegal, further reinforcing the Bissau-Guinean contingent there (Cardoso 2002), but also to the Republic of Guinea, where the PAIGC had its headquarters at the time.

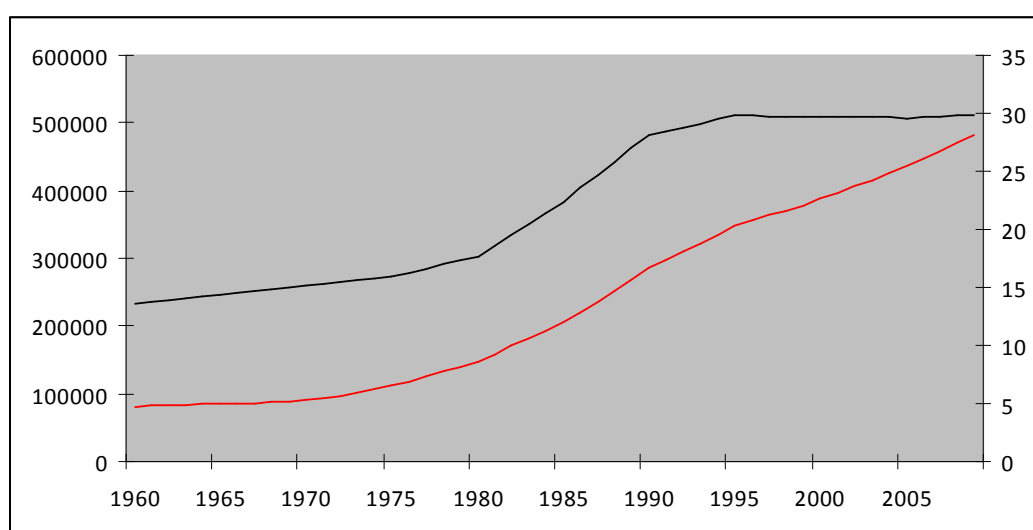
The period after Independence in 1973-74 brought on further changes to the patterns of population movement and international migration within and from Guinea-Bissau. The expansion of economic opportunities in Bissau, especially in terms of employment, which arose as a consequence of the replacement of the colonial bureaucracy with an autochthonous one, increased the momentum of the rural-urban migration and urbanisation processes that had been triggered by the war (Figure 6.8). On the other hand, many (though not all) Portuguese colonists returned to the metropolis, and were accompanied in this move by a first wave of “Luso-Guinean” migrants (typically of mixed ethnic background, relatively high social status and various links with the former colonial administration) (Machado 2002). This constituted the first stage in the coming into existence of a post-colonial intercontinental migration system linking Guinea-Bissau and

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<sup>85</sup> This migration system has also included The Gambia, which is located immediately to the North of the Southern Senegalese region of Casamance and which in this context also became one of the main destinations of Bissau-Guinean international migration.

<sup>86</sup> Interview no.1.

Portugal, which emerged in parallel to (and with few linkages with) migration to France via Senegal. Indeed, although there was a fair amount of temporal superposition between these two systems or chains in the subsequent decades, in a long-run perspective one might say that the former largely took over from the latter, given that fresh migration flows to France began slowly to decline, as a consequence of the tightening of migration restrictions in this country during the economic downturn of the 1970s, precisely as migration to Portugal started to grow in importance<sup>87</sup>. Additionally, the country's independence also enabled some of the Bissau-Guinean population who had fled to Senegal during the war to return to the country, even though this took place only gradually and was partly compensated by fresh countervailing outward flows, given that there were other factors underlying migration besides the conflict and colonial repression. The figure of 87,000 Bissau-Guinean migrants in Senegal put forth by Galli and Jones (1987) probably represents the peak of the Bissau-Guinean migrant stock in that country, which according to the available estimates has by now been substantially reduced (HWWI 2007, SCMR 2007; see next section, below).



**Figure 6.8 Guinea-Bissau: Urban population, total and share of total population, 1960-2009<sup>88</sup>**

The year 1980 witnessed the coup d'état that overthrew President Luis Cabral, leading to the separation of Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde into two completely autonomous political entities and to the removal from the administration of numerous Cape Verdean cadres, many of whom returned to Cape Verde. Post-independence political

<sup>87</sup> Interview no.1.

<sup>88</sup> Total (red line, left axis) and share (%) (black line, right axis). Source: WBDI: <http://databank.worldbank.org/ddp/home.do>

persecution and exile were not inaugurated with the 14 November 1980 coup, however, for many people (particularly former Bissau-Guinean combatants who had fought in the colonial army) had already been previously forced to flee the country in order to escape graver consequences (indeed, many were captured and executed prior to 1980). As we have mentioned before, the neglect of farming and the rural sector were a constant feature of the urban-biased post-independence economic policy strategy, and this caused an exponential increase in rural-urban migration all the way from the developmentalism of the 1970s through structural adjustment in the 1980s and until about 1990, at which time the urbanisation rate finally began to stabilise (Figure 6.8, above). For all its proclaimed intention of 'getting prices right' and boosting agricultural production by freeing it from its previous fetters, the period of structural adjustment in the 1980s in fact corresponded to the peak of internal migration to Bissau, for an already deteriorated socioeconomic situation became even worse for many rural people. The only problem, of course, was that the standard of living in Bissau also deteriorated (Proença 2003).

A partial and much-needed escape valve came in the form of migration to Portugal, which from the 1980s onwards took on a new qualitative character: this second main wave of post-colonial migrants were, and have been, more diverse in their ethnic and geographical backgrounds, less educated on average and more labour-oriented (predominantly relatively young males in search of employment) (Machado 2002). This was made easier by relatively permissive migration regulations and controls in Portugal at the time, alongside the boom in labour demand associated with the latter country's accession to the EU in 1986 and the inflow of European funds that ensued: the construction and public works sectors, in particular, thrived until the 2000s and employed tens of thousands of Bissau-Guinean labour migrants over those two decades.

Another important new type of migration that emerged after independence and has persisted until the present consists of student migration, most often within the ambit of student cooperation agreements with other countries. The former Eastern bloc countries were especially prominent in this respect in the 1970s and 1980s, but the destinations of student migration became more diversified over time: Russia, Germany, Portugal, Brazil and Cuba, among others, have all been important partners in the context of these agreements, in some cases allowing for the consolidation of relatively sizeable communities



of highly-skilled Bissau-Guinean migrants via 'leakage' from university training to the labour market<sup>89</sup>.

The 1998-99 civil war constituted the latest major event triggering abrupt population movements. Because the war was mainly fought in and around Bissau, upwards of 200,000 residents of the capital are estimated to have fled to rural areas (Temudo 2009b:256). This lasted for many months and exerted significant pressure on food production and provision systems, which were already under stress due to the direct disruption caused by the fighting. In addition, a few thousand relatively wealthy and educated residents of Bissau, who were able to mobilise the necessary resources in a short period of time, fled the country (especially to Portugal), some of them eventually deciding to remain away after the conflict came to an end.

Finally, the 2000s may be described as the period of diversification of Bissau-Guinean international migration, from a pattern that was largely built on colonial (France, via Senegal) and post-colonial (Portugal) linkages to one that has gradually become more flexible, varied and responsive to differential labour market opportunities. Two main factors concurred to account for this. First, the acquisition of Portuguese citizenship, or at least permanent residence rights, by many Bissau-Guinean migrants who had been in Portugal for some time, which made it easier for them to circulate to other EU countries. Second, the gradual deceleration (and then recession) of the Portuguese economy from the early 2000s onwards, which disproportionately affected the construction and public works sectors and left many immigrants without a job. Although some responded to this by returning (more or less temporarily) to Guinea-Bissau, others have sought jobs in other labour markets that, at least for a while, exhibited more dynamism. Spain has been a case in point, given the continuing demand for low-skilled labour in its economy, which accounted for the exponential increase in the Bissau-Guinean community in this country over the last decade (especially in the Basque Country and the agricultural region of Almeria)<sup>90</sup>, but there is also evidence of the United Kingdom and Luxembourg emerging as important new extensions of the diaspora in recent times (Carreiro 2011).

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<sup>89</sup> Interview no.5.

<sup>90</sup> Interview no.2.

### 6.3.2 The Bissau-Guinean diaspora in the present day

Ascertaining the quantitative and qualitative features of the Bissau-Guinean diaspora is a task made difficult by several factors. First, the statistical data are scattered among different sources in different host countries, are not always made available due to the low absolute quantitative figures of the community in question and are plagued by issues of reliability (given the limited and fallible character of the data-collection instruments that support them). Second, depending on the host contexts, there is sometimes a considerable share of irregular migration flows and stocks that are statistically invisible. Third, with the exception of a few studies in Portugal and France, there has been a general lack of academic attention to Bissau-Guinean migrant communities in their countries of reception. Fourth, in the case of migration to France, many migrants of Bissau-Guinean origin, as well as their descendants, are statistically invisible due to having migrated via Senegal and under Senegalese or French citizenship. And fifth, the flexibility of the flows in response to changing conditions, along with the porosity of some borders (between Guinea-Bissau and Senegal and between Portugal and Spain, for example), raise additional problems to the statistical depiction of this reality. All of these reasons require us to triangulate the available statistical information with (typically more up-to-date) *ad hoc* qualitative evidence, under the light of the historical processes described in the previous section.

The 2007 Global Migrant Origin Database (SCMR 2007), which was compiled based on a variety of sources, indicates Senegal as hosting the single largest Bissau-Guinean community abroad (estimated at 32,628), followed by Portugal (21,435), The Gambia (17,130) and France (8,125). These figures, added to relatively smaller communities in a variety of other countries, are consistent with the overall estimate of the total emigrant stock at 111,300, or 6.8% of the population, put forth by the World Bank (2011). However, there are indications that this database underestimates the actual figures in several cases, and that the latter overall estimate is therefore also likely to be an underestimation.

In the case of Senegal, it seems unquestionable that the 87,000 estimate put forth in the 1980s (Galli and Jones 1987) has gone down substantially, though hardly to the 7,500 in the late 1990s suggested in HWWI (2007). Solid evidence lacks in this respect, but in view of the *ad hoc* qualitative evidence, we may safely consider the SCMR (2007) figure of around 33,000 as an absolute minimum, and regard the Bissau-Guinean migrant community in Senegal as the single most numerous site of the diaspora (especially if The Gambia is included in this assessment). By and large, these migrants are concentrated in

the Southern region of Casamance and Dakar (as well as The Gambia), hail mostly from the Northern region of Guinea-Bissau and the Manjaco ethnic group, exhibit a high feminisation rate and have for the most part taken up relatively low-skilled occupations.

The Bissau-Guinean population in Portugal suggested in SCMR (2007) is likely also to constitute an underestimation. The Eurostat puts forth a less conservative figure<sup>91</sup> (23,672 in 2010, downwards from 28,871 in 2008), while the Portuguese Foreigners and Borders Office refers to 19,817 Bissau-Guinean citizens in a regular situation by 31 December 2010, downwards from 22,945 in 2009 (SEF 2010). However, there is widespread agreement among researchers (e.g. Carreiro 2011; Có<sup>92</sup>) that if we add to these the number of Bissau-Guinean migrants in an irregular situation and those who have in the meantime acquired Portuguese citizenship, the number of people of Bissau-Guinean origin in Portugal probably adds up to some 40,000-50,000. Having said this, there are clear indications that this community has experienced a reduction over the last decade (for the reasons explained in the previous section), fuelling both some return migration to Guinea-Bissau and, especially, re-migration to contexts that have so far remained less visible from the statistical point of view: Spain, whose Bissau-Guinean community is estimated at 2,226 in the SCMR database but is surely several times stronger (the Eurostat estimating it at 6,679 in 2010); or the United Kingdom, where the SCMR estimate amounts to a mere 539, but where, according to qualitative evidence, the actual figure is in the thousands (albeit not acknowledged by Eurostat)<sup>93</sup>.

The qualitative characteristics of the Bissau-Guinean community in Portugal reflect the superposition of the various waves of migration into this country over the years, including relatively skilled migration in the post-independence period and as of the 1998-99 civil war, relatively low-skilled and predominantly male labour migration between the mid-1980s and mid-2000s, and migration by university students. There is thus an over-representation of Bissau-Guinean migrants both in the lower-skilled secondary segments of the labour market (especially cleaning and construction) and amongst very highly-skilled professionals (especially medical staff, but also engineers and academics, with implications for discussions around the issue of the 'brain drain' and potential initiatives to mobilise skilled elements of the diaspora) (Có 2007; see also this section, below).

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<sup>91</sup> <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/population/data/database#>

<sup>92</sup> Interview no.3.

<sup>93</sup> Interviews no.2, 3 and 8. Additional qualitative evidence is provided in Carreiro (2011).

Of all the countries hosting sizeable communities of Bissau-Guinean origin, France is likely to be the one where statistical under-representation is most severe. The SCMR estimated this community at 8,125 in 2007, while the Eurostat refers to 2,491 in 2005 (oddly, downwards from 7,596 in 1999) and the French INSEE<sup>94</sup> indicates a mere 1,714 economically active persons of Bissau-Guinean citizenship in 2006. However, there can be little doubt that France remains one of the two most quantitatively significant sites of the Bissau-Guinean diaspora in Europe (along with Portugal), even if it fails to show up as such given the large share of these migrants (and their descendants) who have either Senegalese or French citizenship. Mr. Huco Monteiro<sup>95</sup>, an informant with inside knowledge of this community, estimates the total number of people of Bissau-Guinean origin and their descendants to be in the vicinity of 50,000, a figure that is much more consistent than those mentioned previously in this paragraph with such other figures as the estimated 200 Manjaco migrant and HTAs extant in France (GRDR 2010). This is a community that has long reached its maturity, is well on its way to formal assimilation (if less so to substantive assimilation, if by the latter is meant de-segregation and upwards social mobility<sup>96</sup>) and which has experienced a substantial decrease in new flows. However, it maintains important linkages with Guinea-Bissau that should not be overlooked as a consequence of its statistical invisibility.

This overview of the Bissau-Guinean diaspora in the present day is made complete by reference to those other contexts that, for various reasons, have emerged as important at various times in the recent past, but on which little information is available: Germany (SCMR est.: 5,701, associated with student migration and the subsequent emergence of autonomous migration linkages); other overland destinations in West Africa like the Republic of Guinea (est. 7,326), Burkina Faso (7,448) and Ghana (6,107), on which even less is known but where Bissau-Guinean migration is likely to be mostly associated with trade networks and labour mobilisation from below<sup>97</sup>; Cape Verde, where an estimated 10,000

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<sup>94</sup> [http://www.insee.fr/fr/themes/detail.asp?reg\\_id=99&ref\\_id=pop-immigree-pop-etrangere](http://www.insee.fr/fr/themes/detail.asp?reg_id=99&ref_id=pop-immigree-pop-etrangere)

<sup>95</sup> Anthropologist, former Minister of Education and himself a former member of the Manjaco migrant community in France. Interview no.1.

<sup>96</sup> Interviews no.1 and 3.

<sup>97</sup> To these, we might also add Angola, facilitated by the Lusophone connection and as a consequence of the oil-fuelled economic expansion in the latter country in the last decade. Many Bissau-Guineans have sought to migrate to this country in the last few years and regularly congregated in significant numbers outside the Angolan Embassy in Bissau in an attempt to obtain work visas. However, the Angolan Government has shown little willingness to authorise labour immigration, and it is unlikely that the number of Bissau-Guineans in this country exceeds a few hundred or at most a few thousand.

Bissau-Guinean citizens are estimated to reside<sup>98</sup>, typically consisting of low-skilled migrants (largely in an irregular situation) but also including many school teachers and other skilled professionals who left Guinea-Bissau to Cape Verde by the hundreds in the post-independence and structural adjustment periods<sup>99</sup> (many of whom subsequently re-migrating to the United States, following Cape Verdean migration routes); and Brazil, Luxembourg and the United States, whose Bissau-Guinean populations, brought into existence as a consequence of various dynamics mentioned previously in this chapter, are statistically small but nevertheless important in several respects (Carreiro 2011).

#### ***6.4 Migration and development***

This section addresses the available macro-level evidence on such ‘classical’ migration-development linkages as remittances, investment by return migrants, the ‘brain drain’ and collective development initiatives in the context of HTAs. It does not consider those processes and impacts associated with migration and diaspora that take on a more strictly ‘political’ or ‘cultural’ (and less strictly ‘socioeconomic’) character (on which see Carreiro 2011), not because the latter are considered less interesting or relevant, but because the linkages between those processes and the dynamics of development as theoretically construed in the context of this research project are quite indirect and particularly difficult to assess and interpret at an aggregate level. Additionally, the analysis and discussion of the micro-level impacts of migration upon the social organisation of production – which, contrary to the previous case, are deemed key determinants of the migration-development nexus – are largely left to the village-level case-study chapters and the subsequent concluding discussion, instead of addressed here, for they cannot be adequately assessed and understood through an approach based on secondary macro-level evidence.

##### ***6.4.1 Remittances***

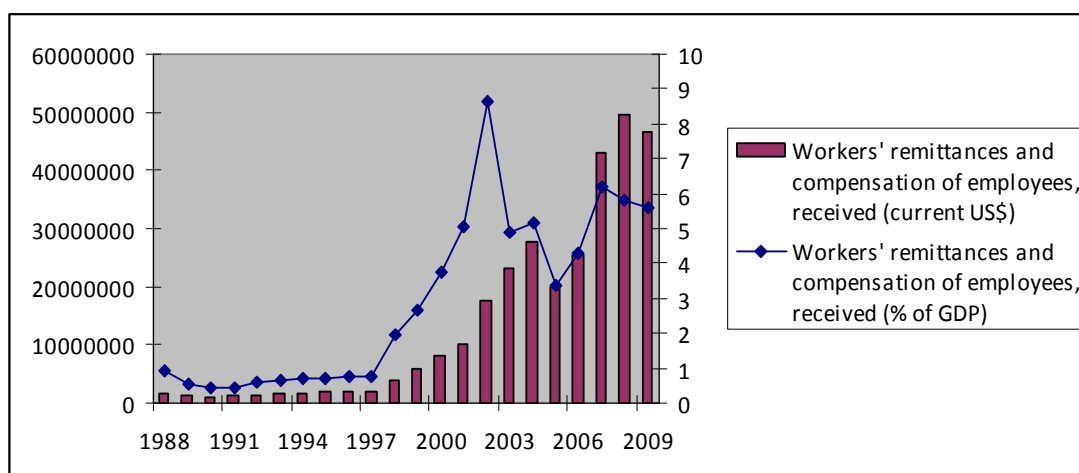
Migrant remittances have great importance in Guinea-Bissau. For many individuals and households in Guinea-Bissau, they constitute a key source of income without which it would be hard, if not impossible, to make ends meet. For all their importance, however, there is a dearth both of reliable quantitative data and of studies on their geographical and

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<sup>98</sup> Interview no.2.

<sup>99</sup> Interview no.1.

qualitative features. The official data on migrant remittances to Guinea-Bissau constitute a gross underestimation of the actual significance of these flows, for they only take into account the money transferred through official channels – in a context where both informal money transfer mechanisms built into transnational trade networks and in-hand remittances by visiting migrants, friends and relatives are very widespread. They should therefore be regarded as a lower boundary and used with caution (Figure 6.9).



**Figure 6.9 Guinea-Bissau: Workers' remittances and compensation of employees, received, current US\$ and % of GDP, 1988-2009<sup>100</sup>**

The data represented in Figure 6.9 shows an extremely pronounced increase around the turn of the millennium starting from an almost negligible base. Regardless of the fact that the emigrant stock kept increasing throughout the 1990s and early 2000s, including through the emigration of a few thousand skilled migrants fleeing the 1998-99 civil war, this increase in formal remittances is in reality due first and foremost to a different reason: the fact that, because of limited coverage by both the formal banking sector and formal money-transfer operators until the 2000s, almost all remittance transfers were made informally until that time. From then onwards, the series exhibits a rapidly increasing trend, in the most recent years amounting to around 6%-7% of GDP. The other interesting feature of this series is the peak (above the trend) around 2003, which may be interpreted as a response on the part of the migrants to the deterioration of economic conditions in Guinea-Bissau in 2002-2004 (a period characterised by significant political instability and major public sector arrears).

<sup>100</sup> Source: OECD  
([http://www.oecd.org/document/0/0,2340,en\\_2649\\_34447\\_37679488\\_1\\_1\\_1\\_1,00.html](http://www.oecd.org/document/0/0,2340,en_2649_34447_37679488_1_1_1_1,00.html))

As mentioned above, there is a general lack of evidence on the socioeconomic and geographical characteristics of Bissau-Guinean remittance-recipients households. At the time of writing this thesis, a study, which has been commissioned by the BCEAO and will seek to shed some additional light on these aspects, is under way, but until that is forthcoming we are forced to rely on more indirect and *ad hoc* evidence. In the context of the fieldwork supporting this thesis, interviews were made with representatives of all four commercial banks active in Guinea-Bissau, as well as with the Commercial Director of Western Union<sup>101</sup>. Even though little quantitative data was forthcoming in these interviews, the respondents were willing to provide some very relevant qualitative information, which was especially interesting and representative in the case of Western Union, given that it operates by far the largest branch network and allegedly holds a market share of about 80% of total formal remittances<sup>102</sup>.

The informants generally concurred on several key aspects. The first one consisted of the fact that the northern and eastern regions are by far the ones accounting for most inward remittances, which they attribute to the leading role played by the Manjaco and the Fula in current migration from Guinea-Bissau. Western Union's location strategy in fact reflects just this: of the 13 branches extant at the time of the interview, six were located in Bissau, three in the east (two in Gabu, one in Bafatá), two in the north (Canchungo and Bula) and two elsewhere in the country (Mansoa and Buba<sup>103</sup>). Additionally, there were plans to open five new branches in the near future, three of which to be located in the north, another one in the east (Bambadinca) and the fifth in Bolama<sup>104</sup>. As for the main geographical origins of remittances, the informants<sup>105</sup> generally agreed that European countries – especially Portugal, France and Spain – account for the bulk of the transfers<sup>106</sup>. This is consistent with the UNDP's (2009:161) estimate that 80.5% of inward official remittance flows to Guinea-Bissau originate in Europe, compared to 17.7% in other African countries.

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<sup>101</sup> Interviews no.7, 11, 15, 17 and 18.

<sup>102</sup> Interview no.18. It should be noted, in the meantime, that the remittance-transfer services offered by the commercial banks are operated in partnership with either MoneyGram or Western Union, and that the latter have many more branches besides their bank-based operations.

<sup>103</sup> Mansoa may also be considered to be in the north, but is further from the main Manjaco homeland and probably home to a Western Union branch due to being an important regional hub. Buba is the main hub in the south.

<sup>104</sup> Interview no.18.

<sup>105</sup> Specifically, interviews no.11 and 18.

<sup>106</sup> The only exception to this was Mr. Júlio Sanches, of the Banco Regional de Solidariedade, who indicated that in the case of his bank remittances from other countries in West Africa, especially Senegal, predominate, followed by Portugal and France. This is likely accounted for at least partly by the fact that this is a sub-regional bank with branches across West Africa.

With regard to the average amounts transferred per transaction, the respondents were also consistent in the figures indicated – about 100 US\$, which indeed is also consistent with the monthly amounts indicated by the migrants included in the snowballing sample used in Carreiro's (2011) survey of transnational practices by migrants in Portugal (typically, 50-100 Euros). Reportedly, these transfers are typically transferred on a monthly basis (although the Fula were claimed to typically transfer more often and in lesser amounts) and function above all as a complement to the income of the recipient households in Guinea-Bissau, making it possible or easier to meet such basic needs as food, health and education – even though the use of remittances to finance relatively small investments in construction and real estate was also mentioned to occur sporadically. Nevertheless, according to the Western Union representative, the Fula are unique in that “a lot of the money is remitted within the context of commercial circulation, that is to say, a recycling of the revenue accrued from their trading activities”<sup>107</sup>.

The *ad hoc* evidence so consistently transmitted by the respondents renders four aspects very clear: first, that the northern (Manjaco) and eastern (Fula) regions, in addition to Bissau, currently account for the lion's share of remittances, confirming prior indications that these constitute the predominant groups in current Bissau-Guinean migration and seemingly validating the choice of village-level case-study contexts in the context of this research project; second, the fact that remittances to the northern region by Manjaco migrants remain strong despite the gradual decline of the migration chain to France – indeed, contradicting the official statistical figures on the size of this community in France, as well as, to a certain extent, the empirical evidence that I collected myself on the prevalence of remittance-sending practices in the Manjaco village of Caiomete (Chapter 7, below); third, the fact that the average amounts transferred by the migrants are quite large for Bissau-Guinean standards and overwhelmingly used to meet basic needs; and fourth, the fact that, seemingly, the use of remittances for investment purposes is much less common, and largely limited to either the construction and purchase of homes or, in the specific case of the Fula, their use as merchant capital.

In sum, remittances constitute a very important source of income for many families in Guinea-Bissau, especially in Bissau, the east and the north. In aggregate terms, official remittances account for about 7-8% of GDP, but their real total significance is easily twice as large. They serve a very important welfare function by making it possible to finance basic

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<sup>107</sup> Interview no.18.



consumption expenses in such key areas as food, health and education, and thereby also increase the size of the domestic market and exert a (probably limited) multiplier effect. As far as investment goes, however, the available evidence suggests that the impact of remittances is largely limited to two main sectors: local construction and the trade networks of the Fula.

#### *6.4.2 Collective HTA initiatives*

In addition to the support provided by individual migrants to individual people and households in Guinea-Bissau, the country has also long seen collective ‘development’ initiatives undertaken by many of its migrants, typically organised at the village level (HTAs). As far as the various host contexts are concerned, these are especially common in Portugal and France, where they combine various welfare and socialisation functions aimed at the migrants themselves with initiatives aimed at improving the living conditions in the villages whence they hail, thereby reflecting the translocal character of a large share of the migration flows from Guinea-Bissau (Carreiro 2007, 2011; GRDR 2010; Quintino 2010).

Carreiro (2007) identified a total of 51 Bissau-Guinean migrant associations in Portugal, 35 of which were HTAs. Quintino (2010) refers instead to 35 associations, including 22 HTAs, as having been acknowledged in 2005 by the recently-constituted Federation of Bissau-Guinean Associations in Portugal. However, the total number of migrant associations (HTAs or otherwise) in Portugal in the present is probably closer to 60-70<sup>108</sup>, even though this figure includes collective initiatives with an informal character. In the case of France, the survey of Manjaco associations in that country undertaken by the GRDR (2010) involved interviews with 59 associations; however, the same report suggests that the total number of Manjaco association in France may in fact be as large as 200 (again including many informal associations – and reflecting the longer historical presence of the Bissau-Guinean community in this country).

Of all the groups that participate in migration from Guinea-Bissau, the Manjaco are by far the ones exhibiting greater collective involvement in associations and initiatives of this kind: 3/4 of the HTAs surveyed by Carreiro (2007) in Portugal were Manjaco associations. Although the GRDR study in France (2010) was deliberately limited to Manjaco associations, and thus cannot be used to draw comparisons in this respect, we should bear in mind that the Bissau-Guinean community in France overwhelmingly comprises people of

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<sup>108</sup> Personal communication with Ms. Maria Carreiro, researcher. Bissau, 20 July 2011.

Manjaco background, hence we may safely conclude that the HTA phenomenon in the Bissau-Guinean context is largely accounted for by initiatives undertaken by migrants of Manjaco ethnic background, to the benefit of villages in the northern region. As is widely acknowledged in Guinea-Bissau, collective hometown development initiatives are a standard practice amongst Manjaco migrants, but much less so among the Fula and other groups – and, obviously, even less so among the more highly-skilled migrants that originally migrated from the capital.

The collective development initiatives of these HTAs have been relatively varied, but as a general rule their impact is quite *visible*, insofar as these associations tend to favour investments in various physical infrastructures that provide tangible evidence of their effort and commitment. Most typically, these have consisted in the construction or rehabilitation of school and healthcare facilities in the villages of origin. However, road rehabilitation, emergency help in the form of food and medicine, new boats for river and oceanic transport of people and various other contributions have also been reported to have occurred in several cases (Carreiro 2011).

It is apparent that, especially in the case of northern Guinea-Bissau, these collective initiatives by HTAs in Portugal and France have provided a very significant contribution to improving the satisfaction of basic needs in many villages, complementing (or filling in for) the role of the State. It is also clear that the collective pooling of resources in this context has made it possible to undertake improvements that would not have been possible if support had remained atomised at the household level. However, the welfare initiatives of these associations have also been characterised by some slightly less positive features: first, the fact that, being overwhelmingly organised at the village level, it has proven difficult to promote the pooling of resources on a broader scale and, as a consequence, there is in some cases a certain amount of redundancy in terms of the facilities and equipments extant in neighbouring villages, while larger-scale investments that might be of benefit to the wider region are typically precluded; second, communication between the migrants and the village residents does not always run smoothly, with mutual suspicion and occasional upset sometimes arising in relation to the management and application of funds or the establishment of priorities; finally, the fact that investments in the construction and rehabilitation of facilities are not always followed by investments in the operational running

costs of those facilities by either the HTAs or the State and, as a consequence, they have sometimes ended up inactive and useless for long periods after the initial investments<sup>109</sup>.

#### 6.4.3 Skilled migration and the 'brain drain'

Skilled migration from Guinea-Bissau is largely a post-independence phenomenon, not least because the level of access to education in the colonial period was extremely limited. It has taken on two different forms: migration by skilled professionals who were professionally active in Guinea-Bissau prior to migrating, for various political and economic reasons, at various times; and leakage of university students into foreign labour markets after training abroad.

The former variety has disproportionately concerned three groups of professionals: nurses and auxiliary medical staff; high-school teachers; and medical doctors<sup>110</sup>. The emigration of nurses who had been trained under the colonial administration took place *en masse* shortly after independence and was motivated by the treatment given to these professionals by the new regime – first, by not recognising their right to pensions entitlements for work done prior to independence; and second, by not allowing them to leave the country and subsequently return. A few years later, a second wave ensued, by those nurses who had been trained in Eastern Europe after independence and who increasingly realised that they could improve their standard of living by migrating to Portugal and remitting money back to their families. Seemingly, many of these subsequently re-migrated to the United Kingdom<sup>111</sup>.

The second main group consisted of high-school teachers, who migrated by the hundreds to Cape Verde in the 1980s, many of them subsequently re-migrating to the United States. According to a perhaps slightly hyperbolic remark by the Minister of Education<sup>112</sup>, “most high school teachers in Cape Verde are from Guinea-Bissau”. These teachers migrated due to a combination of political and economic reasons – most had family and other personal connections in Cape Verde and were faced with a more hostile atmosphere after the 1980 coup, all of which was compounded by the deterioration of professional conditions as of the period of structural adjustment.

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<sup>109</sup> Interviews no. 3 and 8. Also personal communications with local residents in Canchungo, Bugudjan and Caiomete.

<sup>110</sup> Interview no.1.

<sup>111</sup> Interview no.1.

<sup>112</sup> Interview no.5.

The third main group of skilled professionals to have migrated in significant numbers from Guinea-Bissau overlaps with the leakage from student migration, for it consists of medical doctors who were trained abroad and who, either immediately after concluding their training or after shorter or longer periods in Guinea-Bissau, migrated (mostly to Portugal) in order to access incomparably better salaries and working conditions. According to the current Director-General for Health of Guinea-Bissau<sup>113</sup>, there are presently a total of 272 Bissau-Guinean medical doctors licensed by the Portuguese Medical Association – a number which exceeds the total number of doctors practicing in Guinea-Bissau.

‘Leakage’ into the labour market upon completion of training abroad has been especially prevalent (and had especially worrisome consequences) in the case of medical doctors: as an example, one of my interviewees, Mr. Huco Monteiro, mentioned that, in his capacity as Minister of Education at the time, he once accompanied a group of 30 medical students to Cuba, where they received and completed their training. Of those 30, none subsequently returned to Guinea-Bissau – all of them settled in Portugal. Nevertheless, this phenomenon has also affected other professional areas, accounting for the relatively sizeable number of Bissau-Guinean engineers, academics, etc. who are currently to be found abroad – especially in Portugal but also in other countries like the United Kingdom and the United States. Additionally, all of the aforementioned waves and routes of skilled emigration have been further compounded by the flight of thousands of members of the autochthonous Bissau elite during the 1998-99 civil war, who were relatively highly-skilled and employed in a variety of occupations (Có 2004:7).

In sum, the ‘brain drain’ from Guinea-Bissau has been a post-independence phenomenon with both political and economic motivations. It has taken place in distinct waves and mostly concerned medical staff and high-school teachers. In addition, the insufficiency of higher training opportunities in the country, which has been addressed through sponsoring overseas training, has often been followed by the decision by the students to remain away after finishing their studies. In order to mitigate this problem, two different courses of action have been, or are being, attempted: the first one is preventive and consists of the attempt to expand the local availability of higher training opportunities in order to reduce reliance on training abroad<sup>114</sup>. The second has a reactive character and consists of attempts to promote temporary circular migration to Guinea-Bissau by skilled

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<sup>113</sup> Interview in the context of a different research project. Bissau, 22 July 2011.

<sup>114</sup> Interview no.5.

members of the diaspora in some key areas, under the sponsorship of the government and the IOM. The attempt to set up a MIDA<sup>115</sup>-type project along those lines was initiated in 2007 (although it was later halted due to the toppling of the government)<sup>116</sup>, and a new IOM research and assessment project has recently been launched which seeks to pave the way for a future programme of this kind.

#### 6.4.4 Return migration and investment

There is a nearly total lack of quantitative and qualitative information on return migration to Guinea-Bissau. Generally speaking, only very *ad hoc* information is available on who has decided to return, under what circumstances and what their subsequent trajectory has been. Indeed, previously in this chapter we have already reviewed some of the key moments where return migration to Guinea-Bissau occurred on a large scale, including gradual return from Senegal in the post-independence period and the return of labour migrants from Europe in the 2000s. With respect to the subsequent actions and trajectories of return migrants, we are forced to rely on anecdotal qualitative evidence.

One thing which is widely commented is that a significant share of Manjaco return migrants from France have decided to settle in Southern Senegal instead of Northern Guinea-Bissau, as a consequence of the facts that the transnational networks previously built by them straddle this country and that the lower standard of living in Guinea-Bissau, as well as political and economic instability, constitutes a deterrent<sup>117</sup>. Seemingly, similar decisions are much less common amongst the Fula, who have proven more likely to return either to Bissau or to their homeland in the east in order to start or expand commercial enterprises drawing on accumulated savings from their migratory experiences<sup>118</sup>.

In general terms, it is a commonly-known fact in Guinea-Bissau that return migrants are disproportionately concentrated in some businesses which have become a standard follow-up strategy for those who return to urban contexts, especially Bissau. In particular, and in addition to merchant activities, these consist mostly of taxi operations and other collective transports, typically using vehicles brought over from Europe. Others, in some cases also in rural contexts, have been known to invest in diesel generators that

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<sup>115</sup> <http://www.iom.int/jahia/Jahia/mida-africa/> .

<sup>116</sup> Interview no.3.

<sup>117</sup> Interview no.1. Also, personal communication with Mr. Duarte Mendes and informal conversations in Bissau and Caiomete.

<sup>118</sup> Interviews no.1 and 18.

subsequently enable them to run small cell-phone charging and DVD-exhibition operations. Additionally, the odd case of a return migrant setting up larger-scale entrepreneurial ventures, like ice-production facilities, has also been documented (Carreiro 2011). And of course all of this adds to the fact that many, if not most, members of the political elite have once trained and/or lived abroad, which in a sense also makes them return migrants (albeit not of the type usually envisaged in these discussions).

In any case, at the macro-level and based on secondary evidence, it is very difficult to identify significant examples of this possible migration-development nexus at work in Guinea-Bissau, with the exception of engagement in merchant activities and small operations in public transports and small local service operations. There is no doubt that, as a general rule, migrants seek to ensure a more comfortable and secure life upon returning than had been the case prior to their original departure. Seemingly, many are successful in this attempt. However, with the possible exception of the Fula trade networks, the usually very small and localised character of their business investments upon returning seems to preclude substantial development dynamics brought on through this channel.

Throughout this chapter, we have examined and discussed evidence available at the level of this social formation on development, migration and the linkages between the two. This has enabled us to reach some conclusions of relevance to the issue of the migration-development nexus in this context. However, in accordance with the theoretical framework driving this thesis, the most relevant and interesting migration-development linkages take place at the micro-level of the social organisation of production, and can only be properly assessed through the case-study of concrete local contexts. Against the general background laid out in this chapter, this is what the next two chapters seek to do.

## 7. Village-level case-study I: Caiomete

### 7.1 The context

Caiomete is a Manjaco village of around 1,800 inhabitants located in northwestern Guinea-Bissau. An administrative section onto itself, it belongs to the sector of Caió and to the administrative region of Cacheu<sup>119</sup> (Figure 7.1). In terms of customary political geography, it is a part of the Manjaco kingdom of Caió.

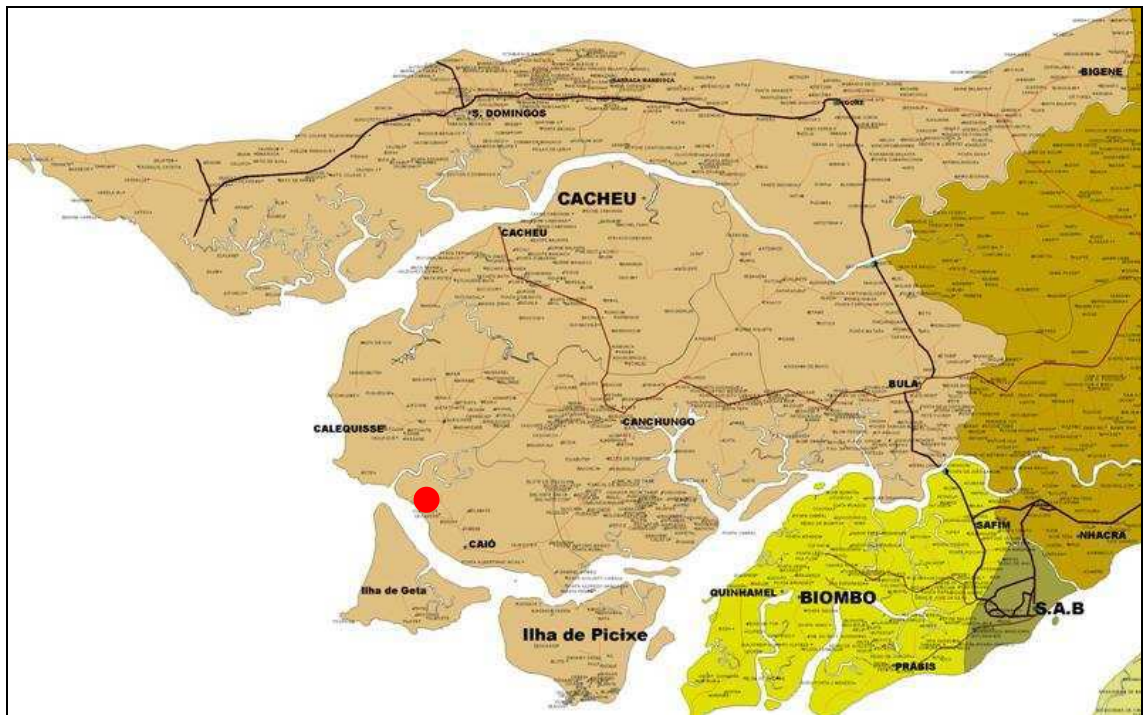


Figure 7.1 Northwestern Guinea-Bissau and Caiomete<sup>120</sup>

#### 7.1.1 The region of Cacheu

The administrative region of Cacheu, in northwestern Guinea-Bissau, is bordered by Senegal (Casamance) to the North, the Atlantic Ocean to the West, the Mansoa river to the

<sup>119</sup> Guinea-Bissau's system of territorial administration has the country divided into eight administrative regions, each of which is divided into sectors, which are in turn divided into sections.

<sup>120</sup> Caiomete is indicated by a red dot, halfway between Caió and Calequisse on the western coast. The administrative region of Cacheu is represented in beige. Source: República da Guiné-Bissau (2007:11)

South and the Oio region to the East. It has a total area of 5,175 km<sup>2</sup>, comprising two large islands – Jeta and Pecixe –, in addition to its mainland part (República da Guiné-Bissau 2007:12). According to the 2009 Population and Housing Census of Guinea-Bissau, the region is home to 185,053 residents (approximately 13% of the country's total resident population), divided into 745 villages ("*tabancas*") (INE 2010:1). The 1991 Census indicated a resident population of 146,570, which makes for an annual population average growth rate of 1.3% between 1991 and 2009 (lower than the national average of 2.2%). The population density is 36 per km<sup>2</sup>, slightly less than the average for the country as whole (40 per km<sup>2</sup>), but higher than average if we discount Bissau.

As most other regions of Guinea-Bissau, the region of Cacheu is characterised by significant ethnic heterogeneity – various ethnic groups, speaking different languages and exhibiting different social practices and institutions, can be found in significant numbers here. In addition to those who are either first- or latter-generation migrants from homelands elsewhere in the country, two numerically important Bissau-Guinean ethnic groups stand out due to the fact that their traditional homelands (known in Kriol as "*tchon*", or "ground") are located in this region: the Manjaco, who have traditionally occupied the area between the rivers Mansoa (to the South) and Cacheu (to the North); and the Felupe, who are mostly to be found to the north of the Cacheu river, along the border with Senegal (and on the other side of the border, where they are known as Diolla).

The regional capital is the city of Cacheu, which was the very first settlement founded in present-day Guinea-Bissau by the Portuguese (1588) – it was not until 1879 that the colonial administration moved its seat from Cacheu to the island of Bolama (Policarpo 2010:29-31). The importance of Cacheu has since declined, the city having long been overcome, in demographic and economic terms, by Canchungo, the region's *de facto* socioeconomic capital. The region is located at a short distance from the capital, Bissau, and its main cities are relatively well-served by roads. However, reaching the areas located farther from the tarmac roads can be hard and time-consuming, especially during the rainy season (June to October). Two rivers – the Cacheu and the Mansoa – constitute important waterways for the transport of people and cargo, particularly in small traditional boats. Crossing these two rivers, when driving from Bissau to São Domingos, used to require that cars be ferried in rather precarious rafts, but that ceased to be the case with the construction of two bridges at João Landim (inaugurated in 2003) and São Vicente (2009).



In terms of physical geography, the region is characterised by its low-lying plains, whose main natural ecosystems consist of mangroves (along the coast and around the Mansoa and Cacheu estuaries) and palm tree forests. However, the landscape has been significantly altered through agriculture, as is most visible in the considerable areas taken up by rice paddies and cashew groves. Some areas of dense forest remain in existence (including areas declared sacred by customary law), but have become scarcer as the pressure to clear the bush/forest to plant cashew trees increased. Annual rainfall, which in the recent past has ranged between 1400mm and 1800mm, is average for Bissau-Guinean standards (Indjai 2002:72).

It should be noted that according to Bissau-Guinean law, all the land belongs to the State, although it may be the object of concession for commercial exploitation. However, as regards customary law (which constitutes the main effective determinant of land tenure), any new occupier may hold claim to a parcel after clearing it of bush/forest and tilling it, or otherwise exploiting it, for a varying number of years, provided that that land is neither sacred nor previously under exploitation. In practice, however, the combined effect of the mounting population pressure upon the land, the increasingly severe problems afflicting rice-paddy cultivation (especially salinisation due to rising sea-water levels) and the comparatively high income that can be derived from cashew have led not only to increasing deforestation but also to increasingly common conflicts over land ownership in this region – as became apparent in my own survey (see below).

Smallholder agriculture plays a central role in the economy of the region and largely involves rice cultivation, cashew harvesting, horticulture and the exploitation of forest products like palm oil and palm wine. This is complemented by small trade, fishing and, to a limited extent, cattle raising (World Bank 2006:47). A few agricultural co-operatives operate in the region, bringing together smallholders in an effort to organise extension services and distribution networks. However, they account for a relatively low share of producers and, by and large, have been unable to considerably consolidate land parcels or introduce significant changes in production methods<sup>121</sup>. Large-scale commercial agriculture and industrial activity are virtually absent.

With respect to some of its main social indicators, the region of Cacheu does not differ significantly from the Guinea-Bissau average. For example, the poverty headcount

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<sup>121</sup> Information provided by Mr. Israel Klug, consultant to the World Food Programme (informal conversation in Bissau, June 3, 2010).

(US\$2/day threshold) in 2002 was 63.8%, compared to 64.7% at the national level (PNUD 2006:10); while the literacy rate in 2000 was 34%, compared to 36.6% in the country as a whole (id ibid:17). Whatever, this also means that, if we discount Bissau (whose indicators are systematically and significantly better than the average), this largely rural region may be regarded as slightly better off than the rest of rural Guinea-Bissau.

### *7.1.2 The Manjaco*

The Manjaco are a Bissau-Guinean ethnic group whose homeland is entirely comprised within northwestern Guinea-Bissau, in the area between the Mansoa and Cacheu rivers. As of the attempt to measure the ethnic distribution of the Bissau-Guinean population in 1979, the Manjaco were estimated to account for 11% of the total Bissau-Guinean population (Galli and Jones 1987:xiii). They speak their own language, but have close ethno-linguistic ties with two other Bissau-Guinean ethnic groups: the Pepel and the Mancanha (Carreira and Meireles 1957:8; Cardoso 2003:148-149). With respect to the main divide splitting the Bissau-Guinean population into two great ethnic 'affiliations', the Manjaco thus belong to the 'family' of Animist groups whose presence as a group in the territory of present-day Guinea-Bissau predates that of the two major Islamised groups – the Fula and the Mandinga (Lopes 1987:12-18).

With a fair amount of caution to avoid the pitfalls of essentialism, some of the characteristics of the social organisation of the Manjaco in this area include its patriarchal, polygamous, virilocal and hierarchical character. It is patriarchal insofar as authority at the level of the family unit, as well as ownership over land and assets according to customary law, are typically the preserve of men – either the patriarch or, in the event of the latter's death, his nephew on his sister's side, who inherits the power and responsibility over the wife or wives and children, along with the property of the deceased<sup>122</sup>. Additionally, most positions of political or symbolic power are occupied by men (Cardoso 2003:161)<sup>123</sup>.

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<sup>122</sup> In reality, the customary rules of inheritance are significantly more complex and vary from one area to the other. Inheritance by the matrilineal nephew usually applies to wives, land and houses, whereas cattle and tools are more often inherited by the sons (Cardoso 2003). For our present purposes, suffice it to mention that, as a general rule, it is generally the men who inherit.

<sup>123</sup> It should be noted that many of these practices – like others mentioned in the following paragraphs, such as arranged marriages, polygamy or the customary political structure – have been experiencing significant change, particularly over the last few decades. However, they remain the 'precedent' from which the Manjaco's social organisation has been gradually moving away. Moreover, all the practices and institutions mentioned in this section remain, to a varying degree,

In the past, marriages were typically arranged, but deviations from this have increasingly become the new norm. However, polygamy remains very much in existence: men have not only the right to take new wives, but also the duty to inherit their uncle's wife or wives (although the latter practice, too, has been increasingly taking on a more nominal and less effective character) (id ibid:155). In its turn, the virilocal character of social organisation refers to the fact that the norm (which prevails in the vast majority of cases) is for the newly-wed wife to move to the village and/or house of the husband or his family (Gable 1996:104).

The basic form of family organisation is the extended family, comprising the patriarch, his wife or wives, non-emancipated children and, occasionally, dependent elders and siblings (id ibid: 154). However, the degree to which this constitutes the 'most autonomous' unit of production and consumption varies from case to case, and especially from village to village. In some cases<sup>124</sup>, the norm is for everyone in the extended family to contribute to, and share in, the same pool of resources. In other cases<sup>125</sup>, people belonging to the same extended family divide themselves into smaller units that control, and benefit from, a separate pool – as physically reflected in the existence of a separate stove in the kitchen (which, in so far as the stove is used to cook a separate stock of food, reflects a broader autonomy in terms of production and consumption). Indeed, in some villages (including Caiomete), it is often the case that the various wives within polygamous marriages (along with their respective offspring) are thus separated into quasi-autonomous units – to the extent that all the wives (except for the 'main' one, to whose stove the husband himself belongs) are required to pay a precisely-defined rent, in the form of labour time, in return for using their husband's land (see below).

In addition to patriarchy, the Manjaco's main customary power structures are based on gerontocracy and nobility. Youths are divided into age groups ("*uran*"<sup>126</sup>) and acquire new rights and duties, as well as enhanced social prestige, as they go through initiation rites and grow older (id ibid:156). However, the symbolic importance of gerontocracy is much greater than its political-economic effectiveness. For the latter, we

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relatively common – not at all an account of a more or less mythical past –, as was transmitted to myself on numerous occasions.

<sup>124</sup> As generally in Bugudjan, the village where I pre-tested my questionnaire.

<sup>125</sup> As is most often the case in Caiomete.

<sup>126</sup> These are collectively named after some remarkable event or novelty that occurred or appeared at the time of their infancy and initiation: I personally engaged in informal conversations and interviews with people belonging to the "*uran careta*" ("bicycle"), "*uran canebete*" ("pocket knife") and "*uran policia*" ("police").

must look instead to the 'semi-vertical' character of Manjaco society, characterised by Lopes (1987:14) as being "in transition between the society without classes [e.g. of the Balanta] and the advanced class-based societies of the Bijagó, Fula and Mandinga".

Thus, we find that the Manjaco homeland is divided into kingships, each of which is ruled by a chieftain or king ("*adju*"). These are selected from within a (hereditary and matrilineal) noble class, the selection of actual individual to be invested being undertaken by sorcerers ("*djambakus*"), as mediators of the spirits<sup>127</sup>. The chieftains, thus selected, acquire customary authority to decide over a range of community issues<sup>128</sup> and inherit chiefly property, paramount among which are the (extensive) chiefly rice paddies (Lopes 1987:166). Additionally, they are traditionally entitled to command a certain number of annual days of tribute labour on the part of their subjects<sup>129</sup> (in the chiefly rice paddies), while, in return, they are expected to provide some basic form of social security, in the form of rice or the right to till a parcel, to especially vulnerable individuals and 'households'.

This customary tributary arrangement remains in existence, as new chieftain investiture ceremonies carry on taking place, chieftains continue to hold chiefly property and tribute labour continues to be performed (as my survey confirmed in the case of Caiomete: see below). However, it has been significantly eroded over time, especially in the first few years after independence (Gable 2003:89). At the time, the authorities of the newly-independent country took measures to undermine the authority of the chieftains by formally abolishing the chieftaincy institution and, in some cases, going as far as executing the chieftains (Carvalho 2003:19). The process of political liberalisation in the late 1980s and early 1990s made it possible for the chieftains to gradually abandon the 'low profile' that they had been forced into: new ones were invested, while others assumed more important positions within the local administration (id *ibid*:19). However, the joint effect of systematic repression in the post-independence period and (perhaps more significantly) of enhanced population mobility has been a slow but steady 'decline' of chiefly authority into an increasingly symbolic, as opposed to effective, matter<sup>130</sup>.

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<sup>127</sup> Personal communication with Mr. Duarte Mendes.

<sup>128</sup> Such as settling disputes, or prerogatives such as proclaiming when it is time to start tilling the rice paddies (the chieftain's being the first one to be tilled) and settling disputes.

<sup>129</sup> Other forms of tribute exist and are still observed, such as the king's right to a foreleg from each sacrificed oxen at funeral ceremonies. Gable (2003:99) refers to this practice as largely extinct, but I was able to witness it myself as of the funeral of a local-level *adju* during my stay in Caiomete.

<sup>130</sup> Interview with Mr. Vitor Caperuto. Bissau, 8 and 12 April 2010.

The physical lay-out of Manjaco villages reflects the lineage structure of society: each ward ("*p'tchin*"<sup>131</sup>) is made up of a varying number of houses (and family units) that can be traced back to the original occupation of a new parcel of land. As the family of the original occupier of the village ward becomes more extended, some of its younger male members become emancipated (and then patriarchs themselves), proceeding to build their own houses (usually in the same ward). After a few generations of application of Manjaco inheritance rules, all of these houses come to be occupied by family units that maintain some lineage connection with the original founder. At the same time, they all live in a ward that in a sense 'belongs' to the direct inheritor of the original founder, who, like the chieftain, is also called "*adju*"<sup>132</sup>.

At a larger scale, each new *p'tchin* is usually founded (itself through a process of emancipation and occupation of a new area) in an area adjacent, or close, to that occupied by the family from which the founder hails – and, as a consequence, adjacent *p'tchins* are also populated by people that maintain some traceable lineage connection. This larger social-territorial unit (a set of related *p'tchins*, constituting a sub-set of the village) is called a *p'boman* and is characterised by the spiritual and spatial association of its constituent family units to a specific sacred ground (usually located in the middle of the residential units). These sacred grounds, along with other sacred areas located outside the village (some of which can only be entered by initiated males and females, respectively) are used on a variety of spiritual/religious occasions, which play a very central role in the social lives of the Manjaco – from youth initiations and burial ceremonies to consultations with and/or promises to the spirits before undertaking a variety of activities. Most of these ceremonies involve the playing-out of well-defined roles by individuals in the community who have been invested with special spiritual powers, and some of them are surrounded by a strict taboo with respect to the non-initiated (Gable 1997:213).

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<sup>131</sup> Note: The Manjaco language does not have a standard written form. The spelling I use here is that which was conveyed to me by Mr. Duarte Mendes.

<sup>132</sup> The use of the same Manjaco word to designate the chieftain (ruler over the kingdom) and the 'owner' of the land at the local level can be the source of confusion. It expresses the idea of the authority of this figure over the ward, in a way analogous to the authority of the chieftain over the kingdom. For example, like the kingdom-level chieftain, the *adju* of the *p'tchin* also inherits chiefly property (rice paddies), may allow destitute members of the *p'tchin* to till one or more parcels in his chiefly rice paddies and was traditionally entitled to one or more days of tribute labour by the adult members of the *p'tchin* (even though this latter practice, at least in the case of Caiomete and according to the results of my survey, seems to have waned considerably – even more so than tribute labour for the chieftain).

The typical livelihood strategies of the Manjaco correspond to what was stated above (section 7.1.1) for the region of Cacheu more generally: rice cultivation, the growing of garden vegetables, exploitation of forest products, artisan fishing and, in recent times, cashew harvesting. Farm animals, including cattle, are raised by many families – the latter in small numbers and for use in ritual sacrifices (at which times they are eaten), though not for animal traction. At the village level, additional sources of income (monetary or in-kind) include petty commerce; weaving and basket making; construction; petty services (like recharging cell phones or selling tickets to public TV or DVD sessions); and agricultural wage labour (see below).

To the aforementioned livelihood strategies and sources of income, we must of course add that which, across Guinea-Bissau, has come to be known as a key livelihood strategy for the Manjaco people as a whole: migration. According to Carreira and Meireles (1957:9), migration in large numbers by the Manjaco can be traced back to the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century and was originally linked to the development of plantation agriculture (specifically groundnuts) in Southern Senegal, with its associated seasonal demand for labour. Gable (2000) traces this practice even further back in time – at least as far back as the mid-19<sup>th</sup> Century. Migration flows subsequently became more diversified in terms of both the geographical destinations and the profile of the migrants, such that sizeable communities of Manjaco migrants and their descendants are currently to be found in Senegal, The Gambia, France and Portugal (see Chapter 6, above).

## ***7.2 Brief geographical characterisation***

Caiomete lies at the end of a 7km dirt track heading north from Caió, which is the capital of the sector and the nearest place where regular public transport (to Canchungo and from there to Bissau) is available (Figure 7.2). Public transport between Caiomete and Caió is sporadically organised in privately-owned trucks. The track itself is maintained by the villagers themselves and, especially during and after the rain season, often falls into a state of disrepair that further reduces accessibility. From Caió to Bissau, it can take between 2h30 and 6h to get to Bissau, depending on the vehicle and the time of the year. Thus, despite its relatively short linear distance from the capital, Caiomete can in fact be considered relatively remote.



**Figure 7.2 Satellite image of Caiomete<sup>133</sup>**

The village is divided into four *p'boman* (Bley, Cassucuta, Barala and Catchem), each of which is in turn divided into *p'tchin*, of which there are 33 in total in Caiomete. Most of these residential areas are adjacent to each other, making for a relatively compact village that spans around 1.1km in both the North-South and East-West directions. The exception is the relatively isolated *p'boman* Catchem, which, despite being located at a distance of about 500m from the rest of the village, is nonetheless considered a part of Caiomete as well. Around the village in almost every direction, we find the villagers' cashew groves, interspersed with patches of palm tree forest, some of which have sacred ceremonial significance. To the west and northwest, at a relatively short distance, we find the village rice paddies (by the Jeta Channel, one of the arms of the Mansoa river estuary). These are divided into smaller units, often but not necessarily owned by different people, which are separated from each other by small dykes (See Figure 7.3). Larger collective dykes separate the rice paddies as a whole from the salted water, but, as in many other places across Guinea-Bissau, they have gone into a state of disrepair for a number of years (allegedly due to the lack of man-power for maintenance: Gable 2006:392) and, consequently, many villagers have lost some of their rice paddies (as rendered manifest in my own survey), or at least experienced decreasing yields due to salinisation.

<sup>133</sup> The smaller cluster of houses on the left is the *p'boman* Catchem. The clearer patches on the left- and upper right-hand sides of the picture are the village rice paddies. Source: Google Earth, adapted.





**Figure 7.3 The rice paddies in Caiomete just before the start of the rain season<sup>134</sup>**

In terms of facilities and commerce, Caiomete comprises some 14 small grocery shops (some of which double as wholesale buyers of cashew nuts or providers of electric power for charging mobile phones), two warehouse discos, two TV/DVD viewing ‘clubs’, a primary/elementary school<sup>135</sup>, a basic healthcare centre<sup>136</sup>, a Catholic church and a football pitch.

### **7.3 Demography**

The extrapolation of the results from my survey (using a sample comprising around 20% of the ‘stoves’ or households) makes for an estimated total resident population of some 1,820 people in Caiomete (Table 7.1). The average household size (based on the ‘stove’ criterion) consists of five people, although this variable exhibits substantial variance (Figure 7.4). A total of 366 stoves were identified in Caiomete, occupying 124 dwellings: that is to say, each housing unit is on average shared by three households, or ‘stoves’.

<sup>134</sup> A patch of palm tree forest is visible in the background. The rice paddies to the left of the larger dyke have been abandoned and are being gradually taken over by mangrove because of salinisation due to lack of maintenance of the dykes. Source: photograph by the author, 24 April 2010.

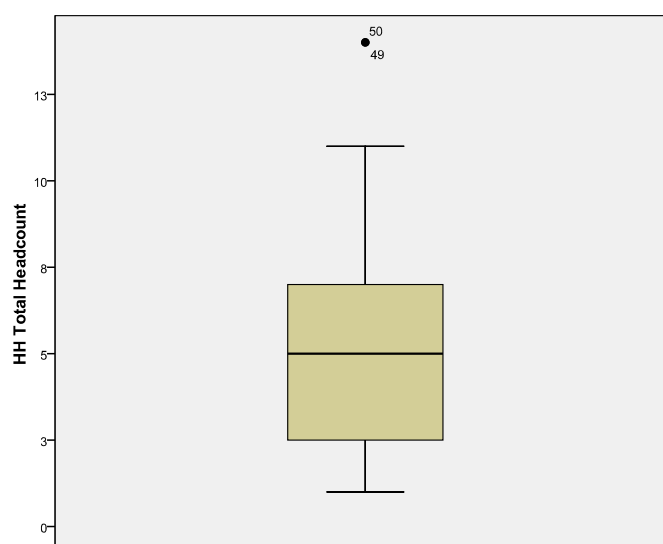
<sup>135</sup> The local school enables local students to attend classes up until the 6<sup>th</sup> grade. For the 6<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>h</sup> grades, they must walk to Tubebe (5km). For secondary education, they must move to either Canchungo or Bissau.

<sup>136</sup> Both the health centre and the new school building were built with financial help from the Caiomete HTAs in France and Portugal, respectively.



	Sample	Estimated Total
<b>Males (15 and older)</b>	79	402
<b>Females (15 and older)</b>	131	666
<b>Under 15s</b>	148	752
<b>Total resident population</b>	358	1820
<b>Sex ratio (15 and older, males to 100 females)</b>	60.3	
<b>Self-reported literacy rate (males, 15 and older)</b>	78.4%	
<b>Self-reported literacy rate (females, 15 and older)</b>	33.6%	
<b>Self-reported literacy rate (total, 15 and older)</b>	50.5%	
<b>Male migrants (age known and over 15)</b>	31	158
<b>Female migrants (age known and over 15)</b>	45	229
<b>Migrants (total)<sup>137</sup></b>	167	849

**Table 7.1 Caiomete: Basic demographic indicators**



**Figure 7.4 Caiomete: Household size distribution, boxplot**

As explained in Chapter 5 (above), collecting systematic and detailed evidence with respect to the age structure of the sample population was deemed too cumbersome and prone to error, and therefore was not attempted. However, the number of people under the age of 15 for every hundred people aged 15 and older is an estimated 70.4, compared to 73.8 for Guinea-Bissau as a whole (INEC 2001). That is to say, the population of Caiomete seems to be only slightly more aged than the country as a whole, at least as far as this particular indicator is concerned. In terms of its ethnic make-up, it is an extremely homogeneous village: out of 72 interviewed households, only one reported the presence of

<sup>137</sup> The number of migrants whose age is known and over 15 is much smaller than the total number of migrants. As explained in Chapter 6 (above), this is because a very high number of respondents were unable to tell the exact age of their migrant kin/former household members.

members with a non-Manjaco (namely Pepel) background. Outside the sample, a small group of Mauritanian traders could be identified as having resided in Caiomete for a few years on a permanent basis.

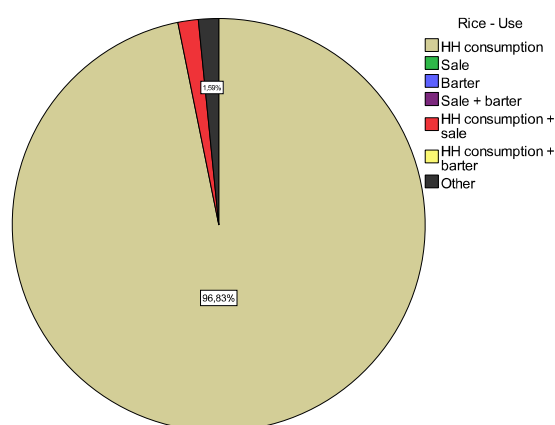
The sex-ratio of the population of Caiomete over the age of 15, according to the survey, is 60.3 males for every 100 females – surprisingly low compared to 94.2 for the *total* population of Guinea-Bissau. Moreover, if we take into account the reported migrants whose age and sex were known and reported, the over-15 sex-ratio barely increases (to 62.5), making it clear that (hypothetically mostly male) out-migration is not to account for the imbalance. We can only speculate with respect to the reasons for this imbalance, which may include a higher-than-average male mortality rate and/or the relative attractiveness (to women) of Caiomete as a site for potential marriage in the context of a polygamous virilocal society.

Finally, with respect to literacy (which, strictly speaking, is not a demographic issue, but may be usefully included in this largely introductory section), we find an estimated adult (15 and older) literacy rate of 50.5%: 78.4% for males, 33.6% for females. This compares very favourably to 33.4% (54.6% and 17.7%) in the Cacheu region as a whole and 32.0% (45.7% and 20.8%) for the whole of Guinea-Bissau (data for 2000: PNUD 2006:17). To a certain extent, this reflects the fact that Caiomete has benefited from the long-standing existence of a school in the village (whereas, according to the 2009 Census, only 31% of Bissau-Guinean villages comprise educational facilities). However, as discussed in Chapter 5 (above), this may also reflect over-optimistic self-reporting on the part of the respondents, in addition to differences in questionnaire design between previous surveys and this one. In any case, as elsewhere across Guinea-Bissau, the wide gender literacy gap is beyond any doubt.

#### **7.4 Livelihood strategies**

Agriculture is the central livelihood strategy for the population of Caiomete. A full 100% of the respondents reported that their households engaged in agricultural activity in the previous twelve months – although two of them, which were newly-emancipated ‘stoves’, had not yet harvested their first autonomous outputs. Among the remaining 70, 64 (91%) grew paddy rice and 68 (97%) harvested cashew nuts. These are by far the two most important crops for the population of Caiomete, although the former is clearly a food crop

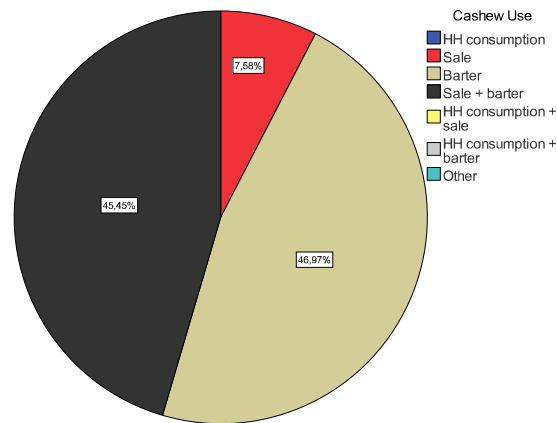
(the output having been used solely for household consumption by 97% of the households: Figure 7.5), whereas cashew nuts are produced for the market (with various combinations of sale and barter accounting for 100% of the cases<sup>138</sup>: Figure 7.6). It is interesting to note that the barter of cashew nuts for imported rice constitutes a very widespread practice – arguably, due both to the problems facing Caiomete in terms of distribution networks and accessibility<sup>139</sup> and to the hand-to-mouth existence to which many of the households are subject.



**Figure 7.5 Caiomete: Reported use of the households' previous paddy rice harvest**

<sup>138</sup> However, this does not mean that the cashew *fruits* are not used in household consumption: not only are they occasionally eaten, cashew wine is also produced through the fermentation of the juice from the mashed fruits and consumed in very significant amounts. However, these are regarded as convenient by-products, the main purpose of growing and harvesting cashew being to sell the cashew *nuts* or barter them for rice.

<sup>139</sup> The traders that come to the village to buy cashew nuts often bring their lorries loaded with rice bags, and engaging in barter is often advantageous to both the buyer and the seller of cashew: the latter gets immediate access to the commodity that (s)he would buy anyway with the proceeds from the sale of cashew, without having to incur in additional expenses or dislocations; the former gets to pay a lower implicit price for the cashew.

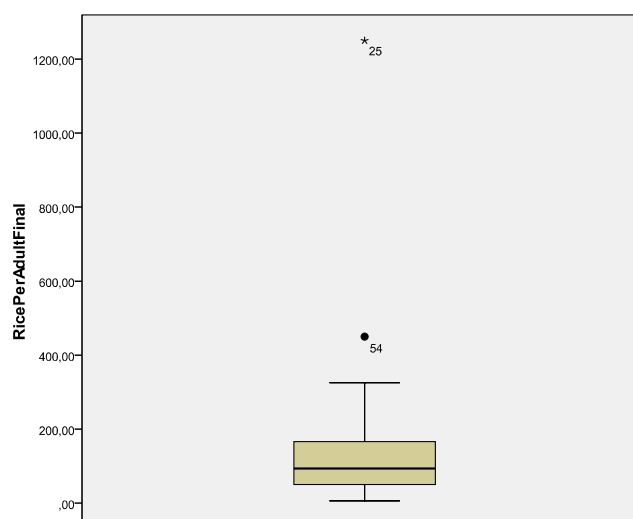


**Figure 7.6 Caiomete: Reported use of the households' previous cashew nuts harvest**

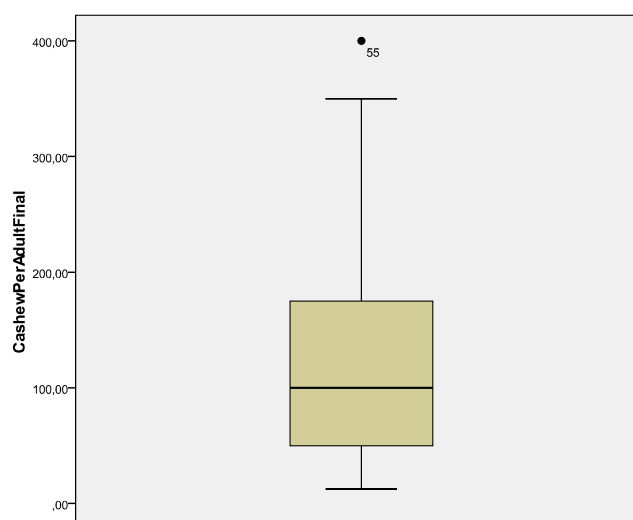
Contrary to our *a priori* expectations, upland rain-fed rice (known in Guinea-Bissau as “*n’pam-pam*”) was reportedly grown by only one out of the 72 households in the previous year. According to the explanations that were provided by villagers, this is because upland rice takes up land that may be more profitably used to grow cashew – the only rationale for growing the former consisting of preparing the land for the subsequent planting of cashew trees<sup>140</sup>. With regard to production quantities, we find that the distribution of the outputs of paddy rice per adult household member is quite concentrated around a median value of 100kgs (Figure 7.7). There are two outliers, one of which stands out with an output of 1,250kgs per adult household member. Reported cashew nut outputs per adult exhibit a similar distribution<sup>141</sup> – also around a median value of 100kgs (Figure 7.8).

<sup>140</sup> The usual practice consists of growing upland rice in the first year after clearing a new parcel of land, then groundnuts for two or three years and only planting the cashew trees after that. Interview with Mr. João Catuluca.

<sup>141</sup> Albeit with the only outlier, which is a different household from that in the case of the rice output distribution, exhibiting less of a deviation (See Figure 7.7).

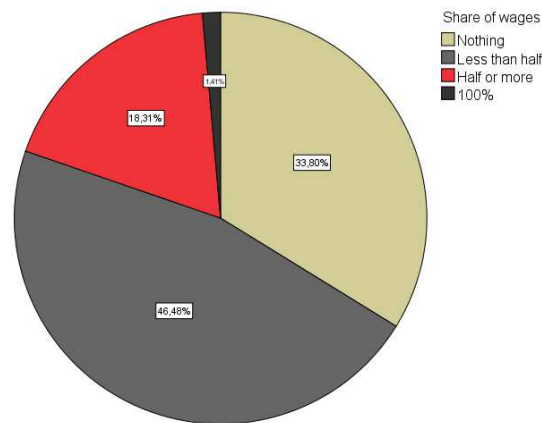


**Figure 7.7 Caiomete: Outputs of paddy rice (per adult household member) in the previous harvest, boxplot**



**Figure 7.8 Caiomete: Outputs of cashew nuts (per adult household member) in the previous harvest, boxplot**

With respect to livelihoods and sources of income, the Caiomete version of the questionnaire explicitly asked about rice and cashew nut outputs and their use; migrant remittances; wages; and then included a residual question on “additional sources of income”. Remittances were indicated as a source of household income by 17 respondents (24% of valid answers). In turn, wages in return for the hiring-out of labour were a source of income for 54 households (74% of valid answers), although they only constituted the main source of household monetary income for 14 (20%) of those households (Figure 7.9).



**Figure 7.9 Caiomete: Share of wages in the households' total monetary income in the previous 12 months**

Amongst the 54 households that hired out wage labour, we find that 28 only hired out labour within the village, 7 only did so outside the village and 19 did it both within and outside the village (Table 7.2). By and large, agricultural tasks predominated amongst those that the people in question were reportedly hired to perform, but only within the village (in which case they were mentioned by 35 out of 47 households). Chief amongst these tasks appear the tilling of the rice paddies (a male task), along with transplanting<sup>142</sup>, harvesting and separating rice from its chaff (mostly female tasks<sup>143</sup>). By contrast, agricultural tasks were reported only in the case of five out of the 27 households that hired out labour outside the village. Construction (masonry and carpentry) and weaving were much more commonly mentioned<sup>144</sup>.

<sup>142</sup> Rice is transplanted from the more protected fields where it is originally planted onto the larger rice paddies where it will eventually grow and be harvested.

<sup>143</sup> These latter three tasks are, according to a number of respondents, most often undertaken by groups of young women belonging to the same "*uran*" (age group), in which case the money paid in return for the work undertaken is collectively set aside for celebrations in which all the members of the group take part. Members of the group who fail to show up for work whenever the group is collectively hired are required to pay a fine as compensation to the others. This common practice of collectively hiring out labour ("*uran ulemp*", or "age-group work"), with the money accruing to the group as a whole, constitutes a part of the explanation for the large discrepancy between the high share of households in which at least one of the members is reported as having hired-out labour and the low share of households for which wages constitute the main source of monetary income.

<sup>144</sup> In all of the aforementioned cases of the hiring-out of labour, people could be regarded as having effectively earned *wages* in so far as they were paid in return for selling their labour, not a finished commodity produced using raw materials of their own. However, with the exception of some of the agricultural tasks, most of these cases would still be more correctly characterised as corresponding to simple commodity production than to proto-capitalist wage labour, given that the finished product was not subsequently sold to the market by the employer (therefore no surplus-value was realised). See also below, section 7.5.

		Hire-out outside Y/N			
		No	Yes	DNK/DNA	Total
Hire-out village Y/N	No	17	7	0	24
	Yes	28	19	0	47
	DNK/DNA	0	0	1	1
	Total	45	26	1	72

**Table 7.2 Caiomete: Cross-tabulation of the hiring-out of wage labour within and outside the village, absolute frequencies occurring in the sample**

As regards additional sources of monetary income beyond those already addressed (Table 7.3), the sale of primary products other than the ones listed in my agricultural output table (rice and cashew nuts) is mentioned by a full 43 (60%) of household representatives<sup>145</sup>. The production and sale of cashew wine, palm wine, garden vegetables, palm oil and fish are all relatively common complementary income-generating activities. Commerce (in the sense of buying to sell dearer) was mentioned by only four respondents. Finally, transfers from other households (other than the migrants, already addressed in this section in the context of money remittances) constituted a source of monetary income for ¼ of the households (18).

<sup>145</sup> This suggests that the questionnaire was poorly designed in this respect; it would clearly have been useful to have included questions on the estimated outputs of at least some of these products.

	n	% of valid answers (72)
<b>Sale of other primary products</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>60%</b>
Of which:		
Cashew wine	20	28%
Palm wine	16	22%
Garden vegetables	10	14%
Palm oil	8	11%
Fish	7	10%
<b>Transfers from friends/relatives (excluding migrants)</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>25%</b>
<b>Commerce/trade</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>6%</b>
<b>Other</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>14%</b>
Of which:		
Sale of prepared foodstuffs	3	4%
Charging of cell phones	2	3%
Sale of the right to reciprocal work by the “ <i>uran</i> ”	2	3%
<b>None</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>17%</b>

**Table 7.3 Caiomete: Additional sources of household income reported by the respondents, overlapping categories**

To sum up, we have seen that rice and cashew constitute the two key crops practised in Caiomete. Both are extremely widespread, but it is the latter that constitutes the main source of monetary income. The distribution of output levels is quite homogeneous in the case of both crops, which suggests the existence of constraints to individual producers increasing the scale of their output. From both the results of the survey and the qualitative interviews, it is safe to say that, for the vast majority of the households, all other sources of income play a secondary and complementary role *vis-à-vis* the sale of cashew nuts. Most important amongst those, however, are the sale of a few other primary products, the hiring-out of labour, and transfers from both migrants and other friends/relatives.

So far we have looked at how the people of Caiomete earn their living and what it is that they produce. The next section looks at *how* they produce it – and what this tells us about the prospects for accumulation.



### **7.5 Social-productive arrangements**

Enquiring about social-productive relations requires that we look both at the specific arrangements into which people enter when undertaking the production of use- and exchange-values and at the property relations with respect to the means of production. In this respect, the first thing to be noted is that Caiomete, arguably like most of Guinea-Bissau, is a society experiencing a gradual transition to the commodity form. A significant share of the households' total consumption still consists of goods and services obtained outside the sphere of the market. This is illustrated by the fact that the quantitative distributions of the households' output of rice per adult household member (which is the main staple and is almost exclusively used for self-consumption) and cashew nuts (which is the main source of monetary income) are more or less identical.

Of course, this does not tell the whole story: a whole range of other use-values beyond paddy rice are produced by the households and used for their own physical and social reproduction; and other exchange-values beyond cashew-nuts are provided by the households, including labour-power. However, the similitude between Figures 7.7 and 7.8 nicely illustrates the situation of a community that finds itself halfway through the process of transition between the sole production of use-values and relatively thorough commodification. A key moment in this process has been the generalisation of cashew from the late 1980s onwards: whether or not it is subject to *monetised* exchange, the growing and harvesting of cashew signified a major step in the direction of the generalised adoption of market mediation between production and consumption. However, this process remains very incomplete, since not only a significant share of the households' food consumption is still produced by the households themselves, but also, crucially, since some key markets remain either absent or only incipient.

The first of these key markets is the market for land, which is virtually absent in both the formal and vernacular varieties. Public ownership of all the land (albeit potentially subject to Government concession) implies the absence of the formal variety of such a market. However, in Caiomete and Guinea-Bissau more generally, the main determinant of effective tenure is customary ownership – which would make allowance for the emergence of a vernacular market. That, however, does not seem to have yet been the case, at least in Caiomete. When asked whether anyone in their household had ever sold a parcel of land, the respondents unanimously (100%) answered “no”, often accompanied with a smile or a giggle.

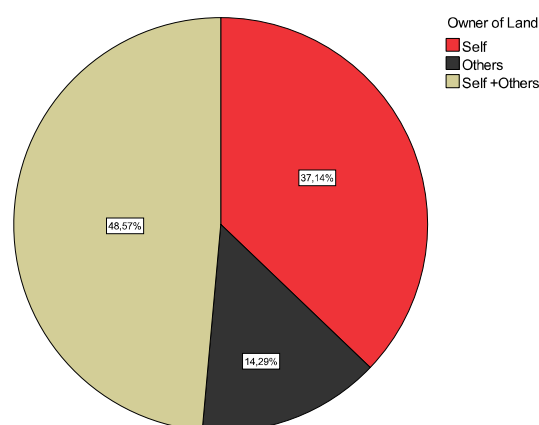
Interestingly, however, this does not seem to be due to under-population and the lack of pressure upon the land, as such a pressure does make itself manifest in a number of ways. The first of these consists of conflicts over ownership: in the survey, as many as 17 respondents (24%) reported having lost land in the past as a consequence of such conflicts (Table 7.4). While ownership over the rice paddies is quite clearly defined (customarily), that over cashew groves is much more controversial: staking a claim over a new grove depends on clearing it of forest/bush and effectively using it for few years. Conflicts arise when a rival claimant alleges previous ownership rights that allegedly have not become ineffective, or alleges that the first claimant has himself relinquished his own rights by letting the land lie fallow beyond a certain period of time. Whatever the case, the considerable degree of conflict over the ownership of cashew groves is indicative of the exhaustion of the previously-existing 'natural frontier' that made it possible for anyone to stake a claim over a new parcel by simply clearing a new patch of forest. This is clearly linked to the rapid expansion of cashew production, the recent character of which arguably accounts for the fact that customary ownership rights and criteria have not stabilised and remain the source of considerable conflict.

	n	%
<b>Conflict over ownership</b>	5	6.9
<b>Salinisation of rice paddies</b>	35	48.6
<b>Both</b>	12	16.7
<b>Not applicable (never lost land)</b>	20	27.8

**Table 7.4 Caiomete: Reported reasons for losing one or more parcels of land in the past**

Another indication of the scarcity of land lies in the fact that, in Caiomete, we find a significant number of 'landless' households. Although all the households practice agriculture, as many as ten (14%) do so exclusively on other people's land; and a further 34 (47%) use both parcels owned by themselves and parcels owned by others (Figure 7.10). Crucially, as many as 24 (one third) pay rent (in the form of labour time; see below) in return for the right to farm (usually meaning cashew harvesting) in other people's land. Although this is not a perfect indicator of the unavailability of unclaimed land – because it might also mean that such land is either too distant, or that tenant households prefer paying rent to the effort required to clear the forest, plant cashew trees and thus stake a claim over a new parcel –, it nevertheless constitutes grounds for excluding the hypothesis

that vernacular land markets are absent due to the over-abundance of land or, which amounts to the same thing, under-population.



**Figure 7.10 Caiomete: Ownership of the land in which the households practice agriculture**

Why, then, has a market for land not (yet) emerged? Based on the empirical information that was collected, it is only possible to speculate with regard to this. According to informal conversations and to the participants in the focus group, part of the explanation may lie in the strong spiritual connection to the land, which is not readily regarded as a potential commodity to be forfeited once and for all. A more functionalist explanation might be that “safety-first” considerations, allied with little alternative sources of income beyond agriculture, cause people to cling on to whatever parcels they may own whatever the circumstances, rather than exchange it for money or other goods: the reason why some households are landless is not because they have been forced to sell their land due to destitution, but because inheritance rules have caused them (especially female-headed households) to be thus. However, in my view the strongest hypothesis may be that given the recent character of the expansion of cashew production, the ‘natural frontier’ may have been exhausted only recently, with customary institutions for the transfer of property over land not having had the time to emerge and develop. If that is the case, we might see such a market emerge in the near future.

The second, and even more crucial, market that is far from fully developed in Caiomete is the market for labour. At first glance, it might not seem so: as many as 50 households (71% of the 70 households that were already emancipated as of the previous agricultural cycle) hired people at some time in the previous twelve months to perform some agricultural task (Table 7.5). In addition, 25 households (34%) hired someone at some time in the previous twelve months to perform some non-agricultural task. Moreover, as

we have already seen, 54 households (74% of valid answers) saw at least one of their members hire out their labour in the previous year.

		Paid Hire-in Outsiders			Total
		No	Yes	Not applicable	
Paid Hire-in Villagers	No	20	5	0	25
	Yes	30	15	0	45
Not applicable		0	0	2	2
Total		50	20	2	72

**Table 7.5 Caiomete: Cross-tabulation of paid hiring-in of other villagers and non-residents for performing agricultural tasks in the previous 12 months, absolute frequencies occurring in the sample**

However, the real significance of wage labour as a social-productive arrangement is put into perspective when we take into account a few pieces of additional information. The first one is the wages' share in the total monetary income of Caiomete households (Figure 7.9): for a full 80% of the households, either none of the household members earned any money in return for labour in the previous twelve months, or else the wages earned accounted for less than half of their households' total monetary income. In addition, while 74% of the *households* had some participation in the labour market through hiring-out by one or more of its members, we find that only 40% of adult *individuals* hired out labour in the previous year to employers within the village, and only 14% did so to non-resident employers. Finally, when we examine the nature of the tasks performed in exchange for a payment, we find that, within the village, agricultural tasks predominate amongst the tasks for which Caiomete households hired out labour, but were most often quite localised in time and undertaken within the context of the 'age-group work' arrangements that we have already mentioned above (tilling the rice paddies, transplanting, harvesting and separating rice from its chaff, and weeding the cashew groves before the harvest). As for labour hired out to employers outside the village, predominant tasks consist of weaving, by women, and construction, by men.

That is to say, for the relative minority of Caiomete villagers who hired out their labour in the previous twelve months, we find that, most often, they either did so for short and localised periods in the agricultural cycle (thus accounting for a low share of the total work effort performed throughout the year) or else they were paid to provide specific

services (weaving, construction) in accordance with a logic that may be more correctly characterised as simple commodity production than as (proto-capitalist) wage labour – not least because the resulting product seldom seems to have been subsequently sold by the employer.

This corroborates the argument that the degree of participation of Caiomete households in the labour market as *providers* of labour is of secondary importance: all the households reported being direct producers (although two were not yet autonomous as of the previous agricultural cycle); wages constitute the main source of income for only 1/5 of those households; less than half the adult population hired out *any* labour in the previous twelve months; and the vast majority of those that did can be subsumed either under the sporadic performance of tasks at specific moments in the agricultural cycle, or else under a logic that is more akin to simple commodity production than to quasi- or proto-capitalist wage labour.

With regard to the participation of Caiomete households in the labour market as employers, we find a similar picture. As many as 50 households (71%) hired in agricultural labour – 5 households (7%) only hired non-residents, 30 (43%) only hired other people from Caiomete and 15 (21%) hired both kinds of agricultural labourers. However, when we look at the tasks that these people were hired to perform, we find that Caiomete labourers performed the same sort of tasks that were predominantly reported in the answers to the questions on the hiring-*out* of labour (which should not come as a surprise): tilling the paddy fields, and transplanting, harvesting and separating rice, all for short and localised periods of time. The tasks that non-resident labourers were hired to perform exhibit a somewhat different pattern: most often, the people concerned were either (usually Fula) labourers hired to weed the cashew groves before the harvest or (usually Felupe) workers hired to build or repair dykes in the paddy fields. Finally, for the 25 households that relied on non-agricultural hiring-in, we find that people were hired almost exclusively to undertake tasks related in some way to the dwelling of the employing household: building fences and granaries, or collecting thatch for coverings and coal for the stoves. Only in two out of those 25 hiring-in households were people hired to participate in the production or sale of *commodities*: one respondent hired an employee to work in one of the local shops on a permanent basis, the other hired another person for the same purpose and, in addition, hired someone on a permanent basis to transport merchandise.

Despite the slight differences in patterns, however, almost all hiring-in – whether agricultural or not and whether within or outside the village – shares two key characteristics: first, in the vast majority of cases, hired labour accounted for a small share of the total labour that went into production, much in the same way as wages account for a minor share of the total income of Caiomete households. Second, only in a small number of cases did the labour that was hired serve to valorise what subsequently became a commodity. Instead, the employers were most often also the final consumers.

This enables us to state two key conclusions. The first one is that, as mentioned above, the labour market in Caiomete is only incipiently developed – in the sense that only a relatively small proportion of total social labour has become commodified<sup>146</sup>. Second, even that labour which is bought and sold is very seldom used in the context of what might constitute a quasi- or proto-capitalist social-productive relation. In sum, wage labour is relatively secondary – and capitalist social-productive relations are well nigh absent. This is not to say that Caiomete is somehow immune or delinked from the logic, pressures and dynamics of the capitalist world system. However, those make themselves manifest in the sphere of exchange, not in the sphere of production.

Perhaps this should not come as a surprise, given that the social-institutional context is in quite a few respects inimical to the emergence of capitalist productive relations: i) few households are landless; ii) those that do not own land (largely due to customary inheritance rules) are virtually always able to access land in exchange for a share of their labour time (see below), namely because of social institutions in place requiring kin, the ward *adju* or someone else in the community to lend or lease at least a small parcel allowing for basic subsistence; iii) a market for land has seemingly not developed, which is a further deterrent to the expansion of the scale of production by any possible upwardly-mobile farmers; and iv) the Manjaco have relatively strong social norms against the accumulation and display of ‘excessive’ wealth.

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<sup>146</sup> In addition to the unpaid work performed by the household members in their own parcels, a considerable amount of reciprocal agricultural labour takes place: in the survey, 25 out of 70 (valid) respondents reported having benefited from reciprocal labour on their parcels during the course of the previous twelve months. This takes place in particular within the context of the *uran* (age-groups): people belonging to the same age-group get together and work on each other’s parcels on different days, in addition to making their labour available to others in exchange for a collective pay that is used to pay for parties, clothes for the group, etc. Individual members of these *uran* may, and sometimes do, also sell their entitlement to the group’s reciprocal labour to a third party (see above, “Livelihood strategies”).

(i) and (ii) above constitute obstacles to downward class differentiation and to the emergence of an endogenous rural proletariat. (iii) and (iv) constitute barriers to upward differentiation and to the emergence of endogenous 'yeoman farmers'. In such a context, it is not surprising that the quantitative distributions of the outputs of the main food and cash crops are quite homogeneous, nor that capitalist social-productive relations are almost absent. Rather, the foremost social-productive arrangements in this village quite obviously consists of simple commodity production – primarily of cashew nuts and secondarily of other raw or finished products and local services –, alongside production within the households for their own consumption.

However, a thorough characterisation of Caiomete's social-productive relations requires that we mention a couple of additional and important aspects. The first one concerns gender-based exploitation in the context of what is clearly a very patriarchal society. This becomes manifest in two different but related ways. First, the gender division of labour within both the household and the housing unit (taking into account that housing units often contain more than one household and, in fact, most polygamous marriages are divided into separate and quite autonomous stoves). Almost all day-to-day domestic tasks are done by women, from peeling rice and cooking to nursing babies and cleaning. This takes place in addition to all the agricultural and other tasks that women undertake outside the home, but, despite their lesser visibility, the former are no less demanding (Gable 1997:230). The characteristics of some of these tasks are such that co-residence (associated with conjugality in the context of polygamous marriages) often causes the 'barrier' of household autonomy to break down: 'secondary' wives most often manage a separate granary and finances, but are nevertheless expected to perform domestic tasks that often are of benefit to people outside their stove – namely the husband<sup>147</sup>.

There is, however, another form of patriarchal exploitation that takes place outside the 'invisibility' of the home and in fact takes on a more formal character. This concerns the fact that many Caiomete women are required to provide a significant share of their labour time as rent, in return for the right to farm land usually belonging to male kin. This usually applies to the right to harvest cashew nuts (not rice paddies) and assumes a form analogous to a *corvée*: the women and her children must harvest cashew nuts for one or

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<sup>147</sup> These exceptions to household autonomy – when we consider stoves to be the best approximation to the concept of household – are not without counterparts: although each 'secondary' wife is expected to meet her and her children's typical needs by drawing on her own stock of food and monetary savings, inter-household transfers occur in many circumstances and are probably most common in the case of polygamous marriages.

two days<sup>148</sup> for the benefit of her husband's stove for every day in which the product of the harvest is for the benefit of their own stove. The cashew nuts harvested in those two 'types' of days (the exploitative ones and those in which they work for their own benefit) are kept separately, sold or bartered separately and the product of the sale or barter is also kept and administered separately.

Table 7.6 displays the cross-tabulation of the gender of the head of household with the rent-paying status of households. We find that the payment of rent is a relatively widespread social practice: 24 out of 72 household reported paying rent to a third party in exchange for the right to use one or more parcels of land. In every single one of those 24 cases, rent was reportedly paid in the form of labour time. Most significant, however, is the fact that a full 2/3 (19 out of 29) of all the female-headed households that farmed on other people's land provided labour in return, whereas only four out of 14 male-headed households using other people's land did so. This reflects the patriarchal character of the quasi-*corvée* mentioned above, which emerges and operates in close association with two other institutions: on the one hand, the customary inheritance rules of the Manjaco, which effectively exclude women from inheriting the land; on the other, the frequent separation of polygamous marriages into separate stoves, i.e. quasi-autonomous units with respect to production and consumption.

		Female-headed household			Total
		No	Yes	Shared	
Rent Status	Yes, labour time	4	19	1	24
	Yes, money	0	0	0	0
	Yes, other	0	0	0	0
	No	10	10	0	20
	Not Applicable (Did not use other people's land)	10	18	0	28
Total		24	47	1	72

**Table 7.6 Caiomete: Cross-tabulation of the gender of the head of household with the rent-paying status, absolute frequencies occurring in the sample**

<sup>148</sup> Amongst the households that reported paying rent in the form of labour time, the most common situations were rent corresponding to either half the labour time in the cashew grove (one day's labour as rent for each day of work for the benefit of the tenant) or two-thirds of the labour time (two days as rent for each day for the tenant's benefit).



The final social-productive arrangement that plays an important role in Caiomete – as well as more broadly throughout the Manjaco homeland – consists of tribute labour for the ward-level and kingdom *adju*. As explained above, this has its roots in the stratification of Manjaco society, the existence of chiefly property and the consideration that productive land somehow ‘belongs’ to those who descend from the original settlers or occupiers. However, because this practice dates back to a time when the centre of the Manjaco socioeconomy lay in the rice paddies, rather than the cashew groves, and because the rules of tribute labour were not adapted to take the latter into consideration, we find that tribute labour is customarily defined as a certain number of annual days of labour in the chiefly rice paddies.

When it is performed for the chieftain (the head of the kingdom, in this case the kingdom of Caió), tribute labour is called either *ulemp cor* (when it is performed by women) or *cadjar cor* (by men). *Cadjar cor* consists of one day of tilling the rice fields as tribute to the chieftain by all able-bodied and emancipated males. The men from each *p’tchin* till a part of the rice paddies of the chief on different days, so that the combined tribute labour of all ensures that the entire chiefly rice paddies are tilled. The women (*cadjar cor*) follow a similar logic, but are required to provide three annual days of tribute labour: one for transplanting the rice, one for harvesting it and one for separating it from the chaff. A number of exemptions apply, according to complex rules that I was unable to ascertain: for example, people belonging to the *p’tchin* Leira in Caiomete, whence hails the *adju Leira* (who is a sort of “deputy chieftain” to the king of Caió), are thereby exempted from performing both *cadjar cor* and *ulemp cor*. Punishments for failing to perform this tribute labour have a social-religious character: for example, the people in question lose the right to have certain rites performed at burials and other ceremonies concerning their family. According to the participants in the focus group, however, physical punishments were a reality in the past.

Tribute labour performed to the benefit of the ward-level *adju*, in the latter’s rice paddies, goes by the name of *blima* and consists of one annual day of labour (regardless of whether it is performed by men or women). On this day, the ward’s men till the *adju*’s fields, whereas (on a different and latter day) women either plant, transplant or harvest it. There is no comparable punishment for failing to perform *blima* to that which applies in the case of *ulemp cor* and *cadjar cor*, but this represents a challenge to the authority of the *p’tchin adju* as well as a breach of the implicit contract under which the latter might, on a later occasion, lend or lease some of his land should a household find itself in distress.

The survey found that *ulemp cor* and *cadjar cor* remain solidly in place in Caiomete. 46 respondents (68% of valid answers: Table 7.7) reported having performed *ulemp* and/or *cadjar cor* as of the last yearly occasion. Among the households that answered affirmatively, all able-bodied men and women performed the required days of labour in every single case. The 22 households that did not perform it should not be regarded as evidence of a significant tendency for this practice to wane, given the various exemptions that apply (for being too old, in poor health, away for accepted reasons or residing in certain wards).

			n	Valid Percent
<b><i>Ulemp Cor / Cadjar Cor</i></b>	<b>Valid</b>	<b>No</b>	22	32.4
		<b>Yes</b>	46	67.6
		<b>Total</b>	68	100.0
	<b>Missing</b>	<b>DNA/DNK</b>	4	
<b><i>Blima</i></b>	<b>Valid</b>	<b>No</b>	58	87.9
		<b>Yes</b>	8	12.1
		<b>Total</b>	66	100.0
	<b>Missing</b>	<b>Not applicable (respondent is the <i>adju</i>)</b>	1	
		<b>DNA/DNK</b>	5	

**Table 7.7 Caiomete: Performance of tribute labour for the *adju* at the kingdom (*ulemp/cadjar cor*) and ward (*blima*) levels by at least one member of the household in the previous year**

The same, however, cannot be said about *blima*, as can be seen in Table 7.7 above: a full 88% of the respondents (valid answers) reported that no-one in their household performed *blima* in the previous year. Some respondents provided me with qualitative information with regard to the reasons for this: typically, either the people in question felt that the *adju* had failed to help them in some past occasion and, for that reason, considered this ward-level social contract not to apply anymore, or else the customary post of *adju* was vacant in that particular *p'tchin* (in some cases having been vacant for a number of years). In some of the latter cases, the explanation for the post being vacant laid in the fact that inheritance rules caused people who lived in other villages (or elsewhere within or outside the country) to be entitled to become the *adju*, but having little interest in relocating to Caiomete. It would thus seem that tribute labour is gradually dying out at the local level (though apparently not at the level of the kingdom) due to a combination of enhanced mobility, the few advantages associated with being a ward-level *adju*, the lesser

social punishments associated with failing to perform *blima* and disagreements between some of the *adjus* and their fellow ward residents.

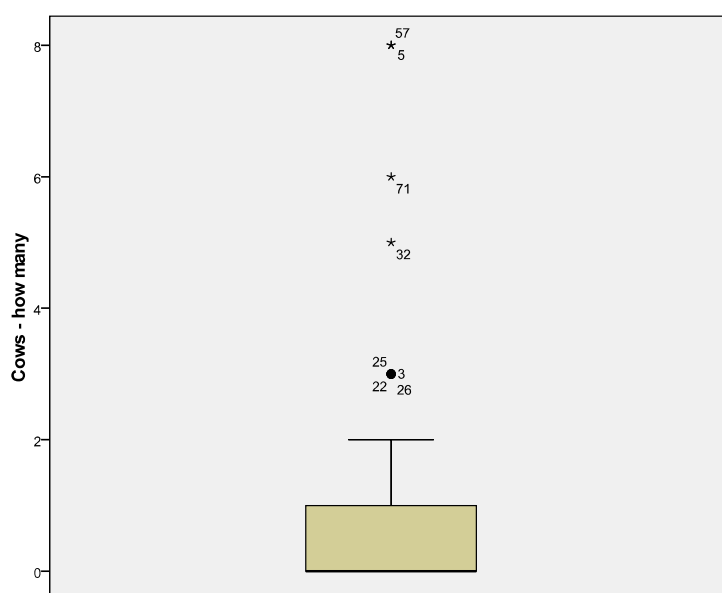
### **7.6 Assets, wealth and poverty**

In the previous sections, we have seen that Caiomete households exhibit a relatively low degree of differentiation with respect to the volume of their crop outputs. Among the reasons that account for this, we find the low degree of recourse to wage labour beyond certain specific tasks (as we have seen), along with the absence of a market for land and the low degree of technical differentiation. The survey questionnaire was not ideally designed for ascertaining the latter, but the participants in the focus groups and in the qualitative interviews concurred in suggesting that there is both a very high degree of homogeneity in terms of the use of agricultural techniques and a low degree of recourse to the use of more sophisticated agricultural tools.

This is partly explained by the technical properties of the labour processes involved in the production of the main crops. In particular, it is notably difficult to either mechanise or use animal traction in the harvesting of cashew nuts. Once the trees have been planted and have grown to the point of bearing fruit, the process of harvesting consists of picking up the mature fruits that fall to the ground in March-May and removing the nuts. These are then collected in containers and taken home, where they are stored until they are sold to buyers. When the nuts are separated from the fruits, the latter are crushed into a pulp in a device that is used to make juice, which is then left to ferment by itself until, a few days later, it turns into cashew 'wine'. Except for this latter part of the process – crushing the cashew fruits (whose purpose, then again, is only to produce a by-product that is sold in relatively small amounts) –, none of the above can be readily subject to technical improvement. In fact, the same goes for the growing of garden vegetables – usually undertaken in small plots – and the exploration of forest products like palm wine and palm oil.

The main exception to the lack of susceptibility to ready technical improvement is paddy rice cultivation. Here, both tilling the land and harvesting the rice could all be easily mechanised and/or benefit from the use of animal traction. However, we find that that is not the case. Harvesting is done using a simple knife and tilling is undertaken without recourse to either mechanical or animal traction, simply using a hand-held plough. The

fragmentation of tenure, the remote location of the village and the inability of even the wealthiest Caiomete households to afford buying or renting a tractor also make it clear that the latter would hardly be an option. Still, while one might reasonably expect that animal traction be used, in fact it is not used at all. Regrettably, not enough systematic information was collected on this that might enable me to substantiate this argument in a stronger way. However, all the sources from whom qualitative information was collected concurred in stating that animal traction is not used at all, for whatever purposes, in Caiomete. As one of the participants in the focus group put it, “our oxen are lazy; they do not know how to work”. Quite a few households (21, or 29%) do own cattle; however, these are usually in small numbers (Figure 7.11) and typically used only in the context of ritual sacrifices (on which occasions they are consumed by the members of the community).



**Figure 7.11 Caiomete: Number of cattle heads owned by the households, boxplot**

Thus it is that Caiomete households own very little by way of productive assets beyond the land itself and a few rather rudimentary tools. If we add to this the low degree of recourse to the use of wage labour and the lack of access to extension services it does not come as a surprise that the distribution of the output quantities is so homogeneous around a low mean. Moreover, if we additionally consider the low degree of diversification in terms of off-farm activities – the only notable exceptions being the owners of village shops –, it does not come as a surprise, either, that the level of wealth of Caiomete households is also relatively homogeneous and not particularly high.

In the context of this survey, wealth was proxied by the ownership of a series of durable household assets (see chapter 5 and Appendix IV). Table 7.8 summarises some key data, and suggests that while Caiomete may be considered relatively better-off than the average village in Guinea-Bissau (a country where there are many villages in which no-one owns any of the aforementioned assets except for the odd radio or cell phone), it can hardly be considered affluent when compared to a place like Braima Sori (see below, Chapter 8). Indeed, the only durable assets, out of those on which questions were specifically asked, which are reportedly owned by a relatively large number of Caiomete households are cell phones, radios, gas or electric stoves (usually gas ones, of the basic portable type), bicycles and zinc rooftops. Now, in Guinea-Bissau, zinc rooftops are the hallmark feature of villages that have made the transition from the hardest of hand-to-mouth existences to the ability to save a little<sup>149</sup>. This shows that that has been the case in this village. However, most households have not gone much further than that when it comes to durable consumption items: no-one reported owning a car or a fridge; only one of the respondents reported owning a motorcycle; and only 8% and 13% own TVs and diesel generators, respectively.

	Frequency (Yes)	Percentage
Cell phone	51	70.8
Radio	32	44.4
TV	6	8.3
Gas or electric stove	39	54.2
Fridge	0	0.0
Bicycle	32	44.4
Diesel generator	9	12.5
Zinc rooftop	65	90.3
Motorcycle	1	1.4
Car	0	0.0

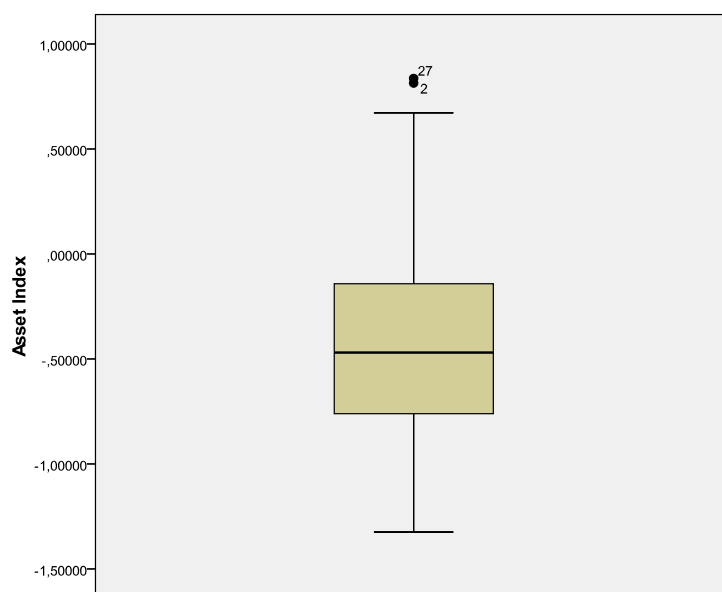
**Table 7.8 Caiomete: Ownership of durable household assets**

In order to turn the available quantitative information on asset ownership into a more manageable (unidimensional) format and make additional inferences, an asset index was computed for all the households in the survey sample, reflecting each household's

<sup>149</sup> Zinc rooftops are better insulators from the rain and are subject to less wear and tear, as well as much less vulnerable to fire, than thatch ones. For that reason, once the households that inhabit a given housing unit are able to put some money on the side, substituting zinc for thatch is usually one of the first priorities.

endowment of the ten durable items mentioned above along with the number of cattle heads owned by each household (see Appendix IV). This asset index was constructed in such a way as to have a mean value of “0” in the sample of 108 households, but its mean within the Caiomete sub-sample (-0.43) turned out to be much lower than among the 36 households in Braima Sori (0.87). A more thorough comparative discussion of the features of the two villages is presented and discussed in Chapter 9 (below). For now, it is more relevant to take a closer look at distribution of this asset index within the Caiomete sub-sample, and to examine the extent to which it is positively or negatively associated with other variables.

Figure 7.12 shows the distribution of the asset index among the 72 households in the Caiomete sub-sample. It is a relatively compact distribution: the standard deviation within the subsample is 0.5, compared to 1 (by construction) within the overall sample (i.e. including the 36 Braima Sori households). Significantly, the wealthiest household in Caiomete has an asset index score (0.84) that is lower than the *mean* in Braima Sori (0.87). Two households appear as positive outliers (indicated by the numbers 2 and 27): both consist of households that earn a part of their income from commerce (while also practicing agriculture), which reported hiring a substantial number of persons in the previous twelve months and which once participated in international migration but no longer do so – all characteristics that can be theoretically posited to be causally linked with household long-run wealth. Therefore, these features of the most prominent potential ‘proto-bourgeois’ of Caiomete do not really make it clear whether, and to what extent, the recourse to hired labour, commerce and migration constitute relevant pathways to upward wealth differentiation. Other pieces of information do, however.



**Figure 7.12 Caiomete: Distribution of the asset index scores among the 72 Caiomete households in the sample, boxplot**

First of all, there does not seem to be any meaningful association between household long-run wealth (represented by the asset index score) and either the cashew or paddy rice outputs: Pearson's  $r$  equals, respectively, 0.08 and 0.07. Seemingly, thus, enhanced agricultural production does not seem to constitute a significant way to become relatively richer in this context. Additionally, as shown in Table 7.9 (below), neither the hiring-in nor the hiring-out of agricultural wage labour are significantly associated with higher or lower levels of wealth. Arguably, this may be regarded as supporting the argument that participation in the labour market (both as employer and as provider of labour) follows institutional patterns that are not primarily related to the households' level of affluence/destitution and that that participation is typically of secondary importance within the context of the households' productive and reproductive activities. This constitutes another indication that there exists little by way of *class* differentiation.

	Yes	No	<i>p</i> -value of significance of differences (T-test, 2-tailed, equal variances not assumed) <sup>150</sup>
Households currently participating in migration	-0.498	-0.213	0.101
Remittance-recipient households	-0.277	-0.496	0.106
Households that include former migrants	-0.430	-0.445	0.910
Households that include former international migrants	-0.436	-0.432	0.978
Households that include former migrants to Europe	-0.505	-0.430	0.662
Households that hired in agricultural labour in the previous year	-0.423	-0.460	0.749
HH that hired out labour in the previous year	-0.433	-0.424	0.955
Female-headed households	-0.602	-0.132	0.001**
Households that report earning part of their income from commerce	0.229	-0.484	0.052*

**Table 7.9 Caiomete: Mean asset index score for selected household sub-samples in Caiomete**

In this context, migration does not seem to be associated with upward differentiation, either. This is discussed further in section 7.7 (below), but it is immediately clear from the Table above that those households that are currently participating in migration are *poorer* on average than those that do not, and that those which participated in migration in the past and have subsequently returned to the village did not become wealthier than average as a result (regardless of the national or international character of their migration project). There are some issues to do with the direction of causality that can be raised here, of course: it might be the case that poorer households are more likely to engage in migration to begin with, and that the successful completion of one or more migration cycles actually enables them to partially catch up with the rest. However, given

<sup>150</sup> A *p*-value lower than 0.10 (0.05) implies a 90% (95%) probability of the difference not being caused by random variation and reflecting a 'true' association. \* and \*\* indicate significance at the 0.1 and 0.05 threshold, respectively.



that remittance-recipient households (a subset of the group of migrant households) *do* appear to be somewhat wealthier than the average, it is much more likely the case that migration fails to show any significant beneficial effects for the households of origin because few of those households are actually sent any money remittances by the migrants, whereas all of them suffer an at least temporary reduction in their labour pool as a consequence of migration.

Now, while (proto-capitalist) agriculture and migration do not seem to play a significant role when it comes to the accumulation of wealth, commerce is a different matter. As shown in the last row of Table 7.9, households that report earning at least a part of their income from commerce are on average much wealthier than the rest; in fact, they are the only sub-group represented in this Table for whom the mean asset index score is positive (i.e. greater than the average in the *overall* sample of 108 households). Taken alongside the previous pieces of evidence, this suggests very clearly that this is a context in which, as often occurs, merchant capital has *preceded* productive agricultural capital as a significant feature at the community level, and where this is in turn reflected in the households' differential levels of long-run wealth.

While it is apparent that the incipiently wealthy of Caiomete are basically drawn from among those who engage in (usually relatively petty) commercial activities, it is equally clear that the most destitute of all consist of landless female-headed households. The mean asset index score among female-headed households is 0.47 lower than that of male-headed households (the difference amounting to 1/2 of the *overall* standard deviation). This feminisation of poverty is therefore extremely pronounced, and is related to other power imbalances and forms of inequality between men and women, both within the household and more broadly within the community. The facts that women are customarily prevented from inheriting most assets and that no women were identified in the survey who autonomously engage in commercial activity (in the sense of buying and selling commodities in order to make a profit) constitute examples of such imbalances and inequalities. The fact that many women are required by their husbands to provide a type of quasi-*corvée* in return for the right to harvest cashews in the latter's parcels constitutes another. And, as might be expected, landlessness and the payment of rent in the form of labour time, which as we have seen have a clear gender dimension, are also associated with a lower asset index score (Table 7.10).

Rent-paying status		n	Mean asset index score
Used other people's land	Paid rent (in the form of labour time)	24	-0,504
	Did not pay rent	20	-0,409
Not applicable (did not use other people's land)		28	-0,393
Total		72	-0,435

**Table 7.10 Caiomete: Mean asset index score according to the rent-paying status of the household**

The analysis of the asset index and its association with other variables therefore illustrates very clearly which attributes are associated with wealth and poverty in Caiomete. The typical wealthy household in this village is a male-headed household that engages in commerce and cultivates or harvests its own parcels (possibly in addition to earning rent in the form of labour time). Conversely, Caiomete's poorest households typically consist of female-headed households that are also partially or fully landless, which are required to pay rent in exchange for using other people's parcels and which, despite possibly participating in migration, do not earn any money from remittances.

### **7.7 Migration and its effects**

Migration is a very widespread strategy amongst the population of Caiomete. This is not surprising, given that the village was selected largely on the basis of this *a priori* criterion. Some telling indicators of the current significance of the phenomenon are presented in Table 7.11: a full 76% of the interviewed households reported the existence of a former member who is currently living elsewhere (abroad in 53% of the cases and in Europe in 29%); and in as many as 72% of the households, at least one of the current members of the households lived outside of the region for more than twelve months in the past (abroad in 53% of the cases and in Europe in 6%).

	Frequency (Yes)	Valid percent
Households with current migrants away	55	76.4%
Households with current migrants abroad	38	52.8%
Households with current migrants in Europe	21	29.2%
Households with economically active (or student-worker) migrants currently way	39	59.1%
Households comprising return migrants	52	72.2%
Households comprising return migrants from abroad	38	52.8%
Households comprising return migrants from Europe	4	5.6%

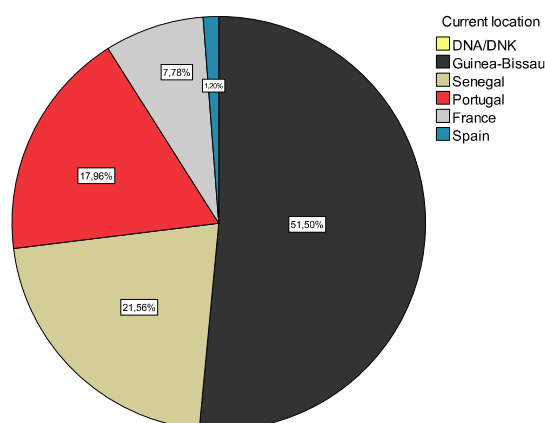
**Table 7.11 Caiomete: Household participation in migration - basic indicators**

Because this process dates back to many decades ago, including in its intercontinental variant, it is hard to find precise information with regard to its early characteristics. However, my qualitative sources concurred that early international migrants from Caiomete followed the Guinea-Bissau–Senegal–France route and that most of those *napat ubabu*<sup>151</sup> migrated by ship. In the present, migration has a diverse character: intra-regional migration to Canchungo for the purpose of pursuing education or work, inter-regional migration to Bissau to take advantage of the opportunities available there, cross-border migration to Senegal (mostly by women, to work in cleaning/laundry) and inter-continental migration to Portugal and France (mostly by men, to work in construction) constitute the main layers in the constellation of contemporary migration flows from Caiomete.

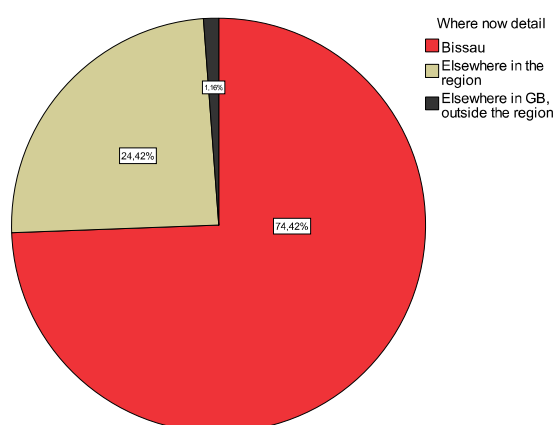
All of the above is reflected in Figures 7.13 and 7.14: the 167 migrants reported by the 72 respondents are divided almost evenly between those who are living elsewhere in Guinea-Bissau and those who currently reside outside the country. Amongst the former, Bissau stands as the main destination by far, with almost all the others living somewhere in

<sup>151</sup> This is the general name given to the pioneers of intercontinental migration. According to Mr. Mendes, the expression literally means “those who row to the white man’s land”.

the Cacheu region (typically in Canchungo). Among the latter, Senegal constitutes the single most common international destination (22%), followed by Portugal (18%) and France (8%).



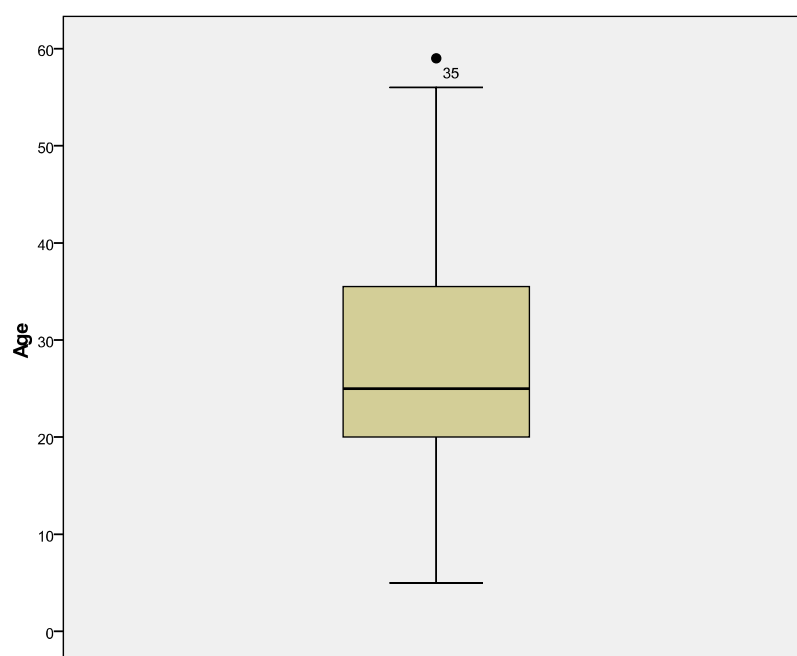
**Figure 7.13 Caiomete: Breakdown of migrants by country of current residence**



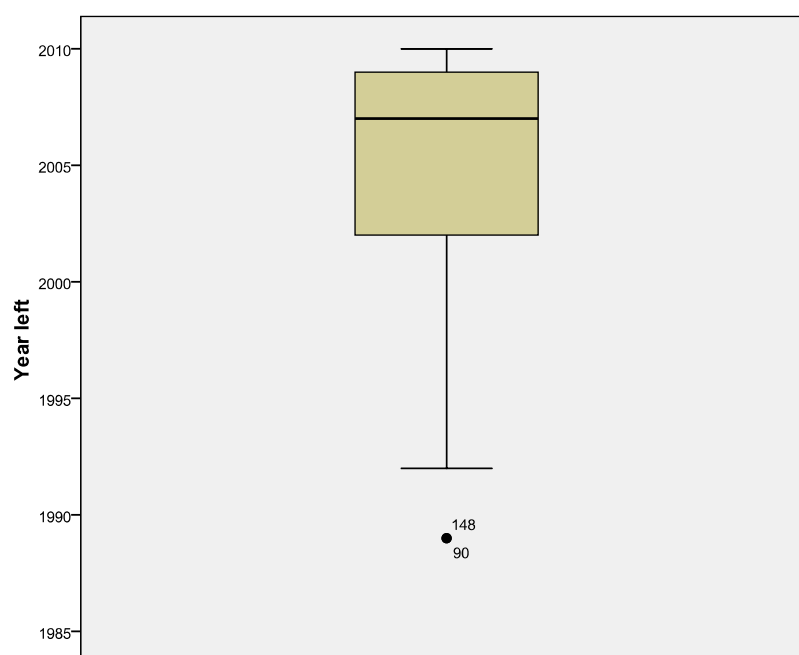
**Figure 7.14 Caiomete: Breakdown of current migrants residing elsewhere in Guinea-Bissau by region**

With regard to their demographic characteristics, we find that the migrants from Caiomete are quite heavily concentrated in the age group that typically corresponds to economic activity, although this information must be taken with caution due to the extremely high percentage of migrants whose ages the respondents were unable to report (almost 50%). Amongst those whose ages were reported, however, none are over the age of 59 and less than 10% are under 15. The mean age is 27, and 50% fall in the [20-35] age-group (Figure 7.15). This is typical of migration contexts in which the flows continue to rejuvenate themselves, as indeed is also suggested by the distribution of the migrants' year of departure from the village: 75% of the migrants left eight or less years ago (Figure 7.16).

It may also be considered indicative of a migration context characterised by a high level of return migration, in so far as part of the reason for the lack of older migrants in the sample lies in their subsequently having returned to the village. Another partial explanation may lie in the design of the survey, given that migrants were identified in relation to existing households and that the households of origin of some of the older migrants are more likely to no longer exist (hence those migrants will fail to appear in the sample). However, taking into account the high share of return migrants among the current resident population of Caiomete (Table 7.11), the previous interpretations of the age characteristics of the migrant population seem quite plausible.



**Figure 7.15 Caiomete: Current age of the migrants as reported by the respondents, boxplot**



**Figure 7.16 Caiomete: Current migrants' year of departure from the village, boxplot**

In terms of its gender composition, the migrant population from Caiomete is almost perfectly balanced: 84 female and 83 male migrants were reported by the 72 respondents. However, this overall balance conceals significant gender differences in terms of migration patterns, as already suggested above. Thus, while male migrants are significantly over-represented amongst those who migrated to Europe (Portugal and France), women migrants are considerably more numerous amongst migrants to Senegal (Table 7.12). Arguably, this is accounted for by both the greater ability on the part of men to mobilise the resources required to undertake transcontinental migration and by the characteristics of the migrants' labour market incorporation in these two types of destinations – most (male) migrants who go to Europe work in the construction sector, whereas most (female) ones who go to Senegal work in cleaning, laundering, weaving and embroidery.

		Current place of residence					Total
		Guinea-Bissau	Senegal	Portugal	France	Spain	
Gender	Male	45	10	17	10	1	83
	Female	41	26	13	3	1	84
Total		86	36	30	13	2	167

**Table 7.12 Caiomete: Cross-tabulation of the migrants' gender with their current place of residence, absolute frequencies occurring in the sample**

It is important to note that a significant share of out-migration from Caiomete is not work-related. In particular, we find that as many as 34% of the migrants moved elsewhere with a view to pursuing their studies. These, too, follow typical geographical patterns, being overwhelmingly found in either Canchungo or Bissau. It is amongst the economically active, however, that the geographical-occupational patterns are most remarkable (Table 7.13). Out of the 70 migrants reported as being either economically active or student-workers, those living in Senegal mostly work as cleaners/laundrerers, those living in Europe overwhelmingly work in the construction sector (or are currently without a job) and those who live elsewhere in Guinea-Bissau are much more evenly spread across the various occupational categories.

		Current Place of Residence				Total
		Guinea-Bissau	Senegal	Portugal	France	
Occupation	Unemployed	2	1	4	0	7
	Construction worker	9	3	8	3	23
	Cleaning/laundrerers	6	12	1	0	19
	Commerce	4	2	0	0	6
	Weaving/Embroidery	1	3	0	0	4
	Primary sector worker	2	1	0	0	3
	Other (skilled)	6	0	0	0	6
	Other (unskilled)	1	0	1	0	2
Total		31	22	14	3	70

**Table 7.13 Caiomete: Cross-tabulation of the economically active (and student-worker) migrants' current place of residence with their occupations, absolute frequencies occurring in the sample**

So far, evidence has been provided as to the significant magnitude of past and present migration from Caiomete. We have found that the ratio of reported current migrants to the resident population is around 47%, which can be grossly interpreted as a full one third of the village being away. Information has also been provided on the characteristics of the migrants and the logics that drive the migration processes. But what have the socioeconomic effects of migration been in Caiomete?

With regard to this, it is useful to begin by putting forth some of the qualitative evidence. Most respondents to the survey, as well as the participants in the focus group

and semi-structured interviews, concur that migration has constituted an important livelihood strategy for the migrants themselves, complemented the income of their households of origin and families through remittances, and helped the village as a whole in several ways. In particular, the generalised substitution of zinc for thatch roofs in individual housing units is widely associated with remittances and the migrants' return with accumulated savings. At the level of the village as a whole, the migrants from Caiomete, through their hometown associations in France and Portugal, have collectively played a key role in financing three main initiatives: the building of a new school building, which currently complements the older one (which could no longer accommodate all the students); maintenance work on the Caió-Caiomete road; and the building of a local basic healthcare centre. In each of these cases, the Caiomete migrants' HTAs paid for the construction materials, the tools, and food and wine for the workers, whereas Caiomete residents provided the labour.

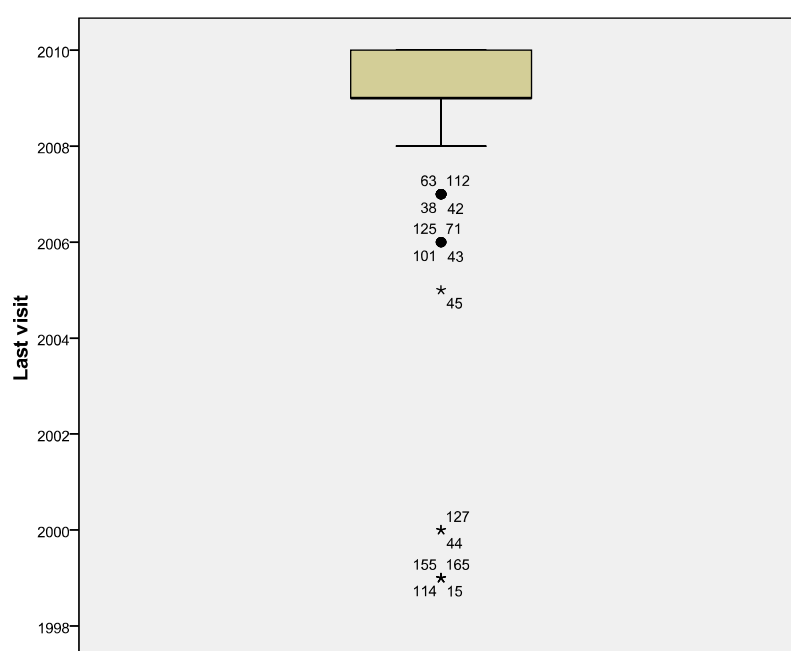
However, arguments were in some cases put forth in support of the view that migration has had negative effects, too. One of those arguments regards the fact that the reduction in the number of young men has made it more difficult to organise large-scale collective initiatives like the building and repairing of the main dykes that separate the rice paddies from the rising sea water. Given the high share of respondents who reported having lost rice paddies due to salinisation, as well as the fact that those initiatives used to mobilise the community as a whole and have not been undertaken for at least ten years, there is certainly plausibility to this argument. Another argument concerns the effect of migration upon community cohesion: some people view migrants as privileged vehicles for the introduction of new consumption patterns and cultural habits, which they feel have been gradually undermining tradition, equality and cohesion (see Gable 1995, 2000 and 2006 for an especially pessimistic account of the effect of emigration in another nearby Manjaco village).

In spite of the above, 60% of the respondents to the survey consider that, overall, migration has had a positive impact upon the village as a whole, compared to 18% who feel that the impact has been a mostly negative one (13% regard it as neither positive nor negative and a further 9% see it as both). Interestingly, when we turn to the respondents' assessment of the impact of migration upon their own household, we find a less optimistic outlook: the share of those who are neutral about migration increases (as might be expected, given that some households never participated directly in migration), but the ratio of positive to negative assessments decreases from 3.3/1 to 2.3/1. Qualitative



information provided by the respondents on a few occasions helps to interpret this difference: seemingly, there is a significant amount of resentment on the part of some migrants' relatives as to what they perceive as "neglect" on the part of the migrants, who not only are no longer there to contribute to the household's agricultural production but also fail to send (enough) money.

Indeed, the quantitative information with respect to the migrants' actual practices seems to corroborate this somewhat less optimistic view of the consequences of migration for the households who stayed behind. The last visit to the village by most migrants took place in either 2010 or 2009 (Figure 7.17), which suggests that, at least in this sense, they maintain strong linkages with their household and community of origin<sup>152</sup>. However, the extent to which they contribute to the domestic economy of their households of origin is surprisingly low.



**Figure 7.17 Caiomete: Year of last visit to the village by current migrants as of May 2010, boxplot**

Indeed, we find that only 17 out of the 56 households that currently participate in migration report having been sent *any* money remittances during the course of the previous twelve months<sup>153</sup>. Additionally, only as few as 21 out of 155 migrants over the age

<sup>152</sup> Naturally, those living in Senegal or elsewhere in Guinea-Bissau typically visit the village more frequently than those who have moved to Europe.

<sup>153</sup> In two other cases, the respondents either did not know or did not answer.

of 15 were reported to have sent any money in the previous year<sup>154</sup>. In relative terms, migrants in Portugal and France were the ones most likely to remit, whereas that practice was reported as most infrequent among migrants currently living in Senegal and elsewhere in Guinea-Bissau (Table 7.14). Additionally, remittance-sending migrants were four times more likely to be men than women<sup>155</sup>.

		Sent money last year Y/N				Total
		Yes	No	Not Applicable (Under 15)	DNA/DNK	
Current place of residence	Guinea-Bissau	7	70	6	3	83
	Senegal	2	31	3	0	36
	Portugal	7	23	0	0	30
	France	4	9	0	0	13
	Spain	1	1	0	0	2
Total		21	134	9	3	164

**Table 7.14 Caiomete: Cross-tabulation of the migrants' current place of residence with their remittance behaviour in the previous 12 months, absolute frequencies occurring in the sample**

Now, as mentioned in chapter 5 (above), there are reasons to believe that the respondents may have under-reported this practice to some extent. However, the fact that the failure to send money back to the households of origin exhibits such a strong association with gender (women) and locations (Guinea-Bissau and Senegal) indicates that there is likely to exist relevant socioeconomic explanations for the low prevalence of remittance practices beyond any possible under-reporting<sup>156</sup>. Clearly, female migrants (and those in Guinea-Bissau and Senegal) are much less *able* to send money than male ones (and those in Europe) by virtue of their socioprofessional status (and there may also be less of an expectation that they do so).

<sup>154</sup> DNK/DNA = 3.

<sup>155</sup> An additional piece of information of some interest consists of the fact that the 21 migrants reported to have remitted money in the previous 12 months were divided evenly in terms of the channel that they used to transfer the money: 1/3 brought the money in-hand upon a visit to the village, 1/3 used a money-transfer operator (Western Union or Money Gram) and 1/3 sent the money through friends or relatives.

<sup>156</sup> What the migrants from Caiomete did in larger numbers than remit money was to send or bring other material help – clothes, food, cell phones, etc. –, a practice reported for the previous 12 months in the case of 21 out of 70 migrants currently living in Guinea-Bissau and 14 out of 33 living in Senegal.

At any rate, it is clear that the prevalence of remittance-sending practices is very low in the context of this village, and it therefore comes as no surprise that migration is not statistically associated with greater long-run wealth as reflected in the asset index score. If we refer back to Table 7.9, we find that current participation in migration is associated with a *lower* asset index score, whereas past participation in migration does not have any significant differentiating effect. This appears to indicate either that migration has negative self-selection characteristics (i.e. migrants hail from relatively poorer households) or that it causes a relative deterioration in the economic situation of the households of origin, presumably through the reduction in those households' pool of labour. The answers to the survey do not make it possible to disentangle these two effects, but qualitative information collected from various sources seems to point to the latter effect having greater prominence. It remains true that those migrant households that report receiving remittances do seem somewhat better-off than the average in terms of long-run wealth (Table 7.9); however, as we have seen, there are few of these.

Moreover, when we look at the reported use of remittances on the part of those households that do receive them (an information that must be taken with caution given the fungibility of remittances vis-à-vis other sources of monetary income), we find that purchasing foodstuffs is the most frequent answer (12 out of 21), followed by religious ceremonies (11/21) and health-related expenses (7/21). Only one respondent reported hiring someone using remittance money (to do repair works in the house) and never was the money reportedly used to buy means of production, or otherwise valorise commodities or intensify production. This shows that even for those households that receive them, remittances may play an important role as a complementary source of money income, but are also typically "unproductive", insofar as they are used for consumption, rather than invested or converted into capital. Of course, it remains possible that the additional demand brought on by remittances, to the extent that it does not 'escape' from the village, contributes to accumulation by households other than the immediate recipients of remittances. However, what this particular data seems to preclude is the likelihood of endogenous upward class differentiation directly based on participation in migration and the reception of remittances.

Indeed, when we examine the likelihood of a given household having hired in agricultural labour in the previous twelve months, we find that it is nearly identical whether or not that household was sent any remittance money in the previous year (Table 7.15). As

regards the hiring-in of non-agricultural labour, remittance-recipient households are in fact even less likely to have done so in the previous twelve months.

		Paid Agricultural Hiring-in		Total
		No	Yes	
Remittance-recipient household Y/N	No	17	36	53
	Yes	5	12	17
DNA/DNK		0	2	2
Total		22	50	72

**Table 7.15 Caiomete: Cross-tabulation of the households' remittance-recipient status with their recourse to paid agricultural labour in the previous twelve months, absolute frequencies occurring in the sample**

So much for upward class differentiation driven by remittances. Conversely, however, could remittances somehow act to alleviate the pressure upon local residents to engage in wage labour, such that they might constitute a force (however small) constraining the local labour supply and, as a consequence, the generalisation of capitalist social-productive relations and capitalist accumulation? Here, the evidence is mixed. In order to compare the recourse to the hiring-out of wage labour by remittance-recipient households with that by the remaining households, two new variables were constructed by computing the share of adults (over 15) in each household who engaged in the hiring-out of labour in the previous twelve months, respectively within the village and to employers outside (Table 7.16). When we compare the means of these two variables, we find that the likelihood of an adult individual who belongs to a remittance-recipient household engaging in the hiring-out of wage labour within the village (0.41) is almost identical to that of an adult individual in a non-recipient household (0.42) (Table 7.16). Only as regards the hiring-out of labour outside the village is there a significant difference (0.07 compared to 0.20). This may be interpreted as suggesting that migration and remittances may indeed have an impact of the sort described above – reducing the labour supply by acting as a ‘substitute’ for the local hiring-out of labour –, but also that that effect occurs at the regional (rather than village) level and on a limited scale.

Remittance-recipient HH Y/N		Hire-out village HH share	Hire-out outside HH share
No	Mean	0.427	0.204
	N	52	52
Yes	Mean	0.417	0.068
	N	17	17
<i>p</i> -value of significance of differences (T-test, 2-tailed)		0.929	0.01*

**Table 7.16 Caiomete: Comparison of the mean recourse to the hiring-out of wage labour in the previous twelve months by remittance-recipient and non-recipient households**

Still, comparing the recourse to the hiring-in and hiring-out of wage labour by remittance-recipient and non-recipient households only provides a partial picture of the effect of migration upon the labour market. Not only is it possible that some households may be under-reporting current remittances, it may also be the case that these or other households could have benefited from remittances (or return migration with accumulated savings) *in the past* and used them to engender a dynamic of upward class differentiation, or prevent one of downward differentiation. It is therefore useful to examine whether households with current and return migrants, regardless of their current remittance-recipient status, exhibit significant differences with respect to their participation in the labour market when compared to the other households.

Table 7.17 provides information in this respect. With regard to the hiring-in of labour, we find that current participation in migration reduces the likelihood of a household hiring both agricultural and non-agricultural labourers – the only exception being the hiring-in of agricultural labour by households with migrants in Europe (in which case the likelihood is more or less identical to that of non-migrant households). Although the absolute figures in some of the cells of these cross-tabulations are small (hence the risk of stochastic error influencing the conclusions is greater), the fact that participation in migration consistently fails to be associated with greater recourse to the hiring-in of wage labour enables us to conclude that the endogenous emergence in this context of a proto-class of ‘yeoman farmers’ driven by migration seems unlikely to say the least. Indeed, this corroborates the conclusions previously reached based on the remittance data.

	Households w/o current migrants	Households w/ current migrants	Households w/ current migrants abroad	Households w/ current migrants in Europe
Recourse to agricultural hiring-in (valid % of hh)	75.0	67.8	63.2	76.2
Recourse to non- agricultural hiring-in (valid % of hh)	43.8	32.1	28.9	23.8
Recourse to hire-out in the village (valid % of hh)	81.3	61.8	52.6	47.6
Recourse to hire-out outside the village (valid % of hh)	31.3	38.2	42.1	28.6
Mean of "Hire-out village HH share"	0.572	0.375	0.331	0.353
Mean of "Hire-out outside HH share"	0.171	0.168	0.186	0.134

**Table 7.17 Caiomete: Comparison of non-migrant households, migrant households as a whole, households with migrants abroad and households with migrants in Europe with respect to various labour-market indicators**

Another conclusion from the analysis of the remittance data that seems to be corroborated by Table 7.17 concerns the effect of the participation in migration upon the hiring-out of labour. The hypothesis was that participation in migration may cause a reduction in the local labour supply both directly by removing some of the potential labourers and indirectly by alleviating the pressure to engage in wage labour upon those who stayed behind – and indeed, we find that the likelihood of migrant households (regardless of the location of the migrants) hiring out labour within the village is consistently lower than that for non-migrant households. Moreover, the share of adult individuals who engaged in that practice in all categories of migrant households is much lower than is the case in non-migrant households. As concerns hiring-out outside the village, there seems to be a slightly greater likelihood on the part of migrant households (except for those with migrants in Europe), but a finer analysis, based on the share of adult individuals in each household who hired out their labour in the previous year, shows that in reality that is not the case, since that share is either lower or not significantly higher.

The final aspect to be mentioned in this analysis is the effect of *past* participation in migration upon labour-market participation and class formation. The relevant issues here consist of whether households with return migrants exhibit a greater or lesser likelihood of

hiring in and/or hiring out labour (Table 7.18). We find that the likelihood of recourse to the hiring-in of agricultural labour is not significantly different from that amongst households without return migrants. Significant differences do emerge when it comes to the hiring-in of non-agricultural labour, which, as we have seen, usually consists of improvements to the dwelling, weaving/embroidery, etc. That is to say, past participation in migration seems to be associated with a greater likelihood of undertaking what are effectively consumption expenditures, but not investment or 'proto-capitalist' ones.

	<b>1.Households w/o return migrants</b>	<b>2.Households w/ return migrants</b>	<b>p-value of difference (T-test, 2-tailed)</b>	<b>3.Households w/ return migrants from abroad</b>	<b>p-value of difference (T-test, 2-tailed)</b>
<b>Recourse to agricultural hiring-in (valid % of hh)</b>	<b>70.0</b>	<b>69.2</b>	0.952	<b>71.1</b>	0.759
<b>Recourse to non-agricultural hiring-in (valid % of hh)</b>	<b>20.0</b>	<b>40.4</b>	0.083*	<b>44.7</b>	0.058*
<b>Recourse to hire-out in the village (valid % of hh)</b>	<b>57.9</b>	<b>69.2</b>	0.401	<b>65.8</b>	0.939
<b>Recourse to hire-out outside the village (valid % of hh)</b>	<b>26.3</b>	<b>40.4</b>	0.266	<b>39.5</b>	0.598
<b>Mean of "Hire-out village HH share"</b>	<b>0.312</b>	<b>0.459</b>	0.150	<b>0.435</b>	0.718
<b>Mean of "Hire-out outside HH share"</b>	<b>0.105</b>	<b>0.192</b>	0.145	<b>0.206</b>	0.187

**Table 7.18 Caiomete: Comparison of households without return migrants, households with return migrants as a whole and households with return migrants from abroad with respect to various labour-market indicators**

There may be exceptions to this, albeit not exactly *in* Caiomete: according to qualitative information obtained through the focus group and semi-structured interviews, there are reports of some former intercontinental migrants from Caiomete who, upon returning from Europe, decided to settle in Bissau or in Senegal and bought houses there, as well as of others who have settled near the São Domingos area (near the border with Senegal), where land is more plentiful. Given that these could not be included in the survey,

we can only speculate as to whether this latter group of return migrants is engaged in larger-scale productive activities and greater hiring-in of labour. In any case, it is clear that none of these effects seems to occur in Caiomete.

When it comes to hiring-out, we find that households with return migrants exhibit a somewhat greater degree of participation in the labour market as providers of labour, both within and outside the village and in terms of the share of adult individuals engaging in that practice (albeit without much statistical significance: Table 7.18). This may seem puzzling. After all, does participation in migration – namely, through the effect of remittances and accumulated savings – enhance or constrain the local labour supply? If current participation in migration seems to constrain it, why should past participation enhance it?

The likely reason for this is that the two variables “current participation in migration” and “past participation in migration” are not independent, but negatively correlated (Spearman’s rho is -0.257, significant at the 0.05 level). Simply put, households that currently have migrants away are relatively less likely to include return migrants, whereas households with return migrants are less likely to currently have migrants away. This is intuitive: out of a given stock of potential migrants in a household, some will still be away, some will have returned. For that reason, when we compare migrant households with non-migrant ones (as in Table 7.18), we are also implicitly comparing households without return migrants with households that include return migrants – and should not be surprised to learn that, to a certain extent, the latter comparison, when run explicitly, should tend to produce somewhat symmetrical results.

Arguably, overcoming this conundrum requires that we favour economic over statistical reasoning. In a context where current remittances seem to have at most a small but negative effect upon the household’s labour supply (Table 7.16), accumulated savings from migration should be expected also to have at most a small but negative impact upon that same labour supply. If the latter fails to show up, as in Table 7.18, what it likely means is that the small and negative effect of savings from migration upon the labour supply is more than compensated by the fact that households with return migrants are less likely to currently have migrants away, hence a greater “pool” of potential providers of labour.



## 7.8 Conclusions

However much of an increasing rarity this may be (Oya 2010), Caiomete may be characterised as a village made up of smallholders who by and large engage in simple commodity production in combination with production for self-consumption – a relatively homogeneous ‘peasantry’. They do enter into a variety of other social-productive arrangements, including gender-based exploitation within and across households (sometimes taking up a surprisingly formal character through the inter-household quasi-*corvée*); the enduring remnants of tributary arrangements; reciprocity; and even relatively significant wage labour, though hardly ever of a capitalist (i.e. commodity-valorising) kind. However, the dominant logic is clearly that of simple independent production.

There is little livelihood diversification beyond agricultural production: fishing and cattle-raising are residual; the hiring-out of wage labour outside the village by residents plays a minor role; trade and commerce are only practiced by a small minority and hardly ever at a supra-local level. Agriculture itself exhibits little diversification beyond rice and cashew – and, with respect to the latter two products, the lack of consolidation of landholding, the limited recourse to hired labour, the technical characteristics of the labour process, and the lack of adoption of animal traction and more sophisticated tools combine to give rise to quite homogeneously low outputs. As a consequence, Caiomete households, albeit arguably better off than the average in Guinea-Bissau, also exhibit relatively low (and quite homogeneous) levels of wealth and affluence.

None of this is very surprising if we take into account the incipient character of the markets for both land and labour – possibly due in part to the recent exhaustion of the ‘natural frontier’ in the case of the former, surely due to the lack of a prior process of expropriation and to the existence of social institutions inimical to the commodification of these two key resources. In such a context, class differentiation is effectively constrained – and the prospects for endogenous accumulation are slim. As in other contexts, merchant capital seems to have preceded productive agrarian capitalism: Caiomete’s proto-bourgeois, if any may be correctly described as such, are those who have managed to accumulate slightly greater wealth through local commerce. However, their conversion into agrarian capitalists seems a distant possibility: not only are they able to mobilise relatively little capital, they are also faced with the constraints mentioned above in terms of inimical local institutions and difficulty in acquiring land – in addition to the problems that beset Guinea-Bissau producers in general (see Chapter 6, above).

This does not mean that this state of affairs cannot change, nor that everything is stagnant. Many things have changed in the recent past: the widespread adoption of cashew cultivation, the partial dismantlement of traditional tributary structures and institutions, the increasing monetisation of the economy, the introduction of new cultural habits and consumption patterns. However, significant obstacles remain in the way of endogenous accumulation, if class differentiation and the generalisation of capitalist social-productive relations are deemed a pre-condition. If and when the latter do take place in the future, it is likely that it will be brought about by exogenous factors – possibly through the inflow of larger-scale productive capital, alongside a greater imposition of formal land ownership rights over customary ones.

Could migration act as an exogenous force for development? That certainly does not seem to be the case, at least at present. If anything, participation in migration by Caiomete households seems to be associated with *less* participation in the labour market as both hirers and providers of labour. The prevalence and significance of remittance-sending practices by Caiomete migrants are low, and even those remittances that are sent hardly ever constitute investments, let alone capitalist ones. Not that migration and remittances have played a negligible or negative role in terms of ensuring the livelihoods and improving the quality of life in Caiomete: most people concur that it has made life easier for both the migrants and those who stayed behind, and collective efforts by Caiomete HTAs have left some clear positive signs in the landscape of the village. However, migration has also reduced the local labour supply, and in so doing it may have further reinforced one of the many constraints to endogenous development that operate in this context. Thus, it has both fostered and hindered development, depending on what is meant by the latter.

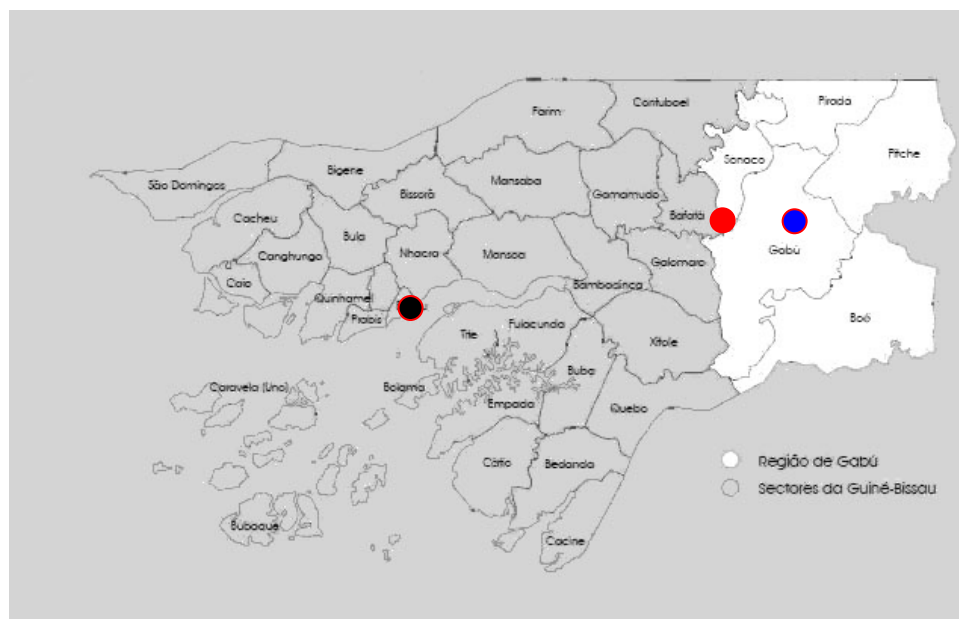
## 8. Village-level case-study II: Braima Sori

### 8.1 *The context*

Braima Sori is a village of around 1,300 inhabitants<sup>157</sup> located in eastern Guinea-Bissau (Figure 8.1). It is a relatively affluent village that is inhabited almost exclusively by people of the Fula ethnic group, and where migration is a recent but central phenomenon. The village was founded in 1942 by a group led by an individual who himself went by the name of Braima Sori – the father of the current village chief. The original founders moved into this area from the region of Bafatá and, reportedly, founded the village with a view to pursuing two main activities: agriculture and the study of the Koran. Quite unlike the village of Caiomete, Braima Sori is very easily accessible, as it lies on the side of the country's main road. In administrative terms, it is part of the Sonaco sector – one of the five sectors that make up the administrative region of Gabu. In terms of customary political geography, it is a part of the Fula kingship of Tumana.

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<sup>157</sup> Estimation based on the results of my own household survey, which drew on a sample consisting of one third of the households in the village. Có (2004:16) puts forth a larger number: around 2,000 residents.



**Figure 8.1 Map of Guinea-Bissau with indication of the location of Gabu and Braima Sori<sup>158</sup>**

### *8.1.1 The region of Gabu*

The administrative region of Gabu is the easternmost region in Guinea-Bissau. It is bordered by Senegal to the North, the Republic of Guinea to the East and the South, and the Bafatá and Tombali regions to the West. It has a total area of 9,150 km<sup>2</sup>, which comprises five administrative sectors: Gabu, Boé, Pirada, Sonaco and Pitche.

According to the 2009 Population and Housing Census of Guinea-Bissau, the population of the region consists of 205,608 residents (approximately 14% of the country's total) living in 774 villages (INEC 2010:1). The average annual population growth rate between 1991 and 2009 was 2.4% – slightly higher than the average growth rate for Guinea-Bissau as a whole over the same period, which amounted to 2.2%. The population density is 23 per km<sup>2</sup>, which is significantly less than the average for the country as whole (40 per km<sup>2</sup>). This is due to the fact that the region comprises some large tracts of relatively remote and very sparsely populated land, especially in its southern part.

As is the case in most of Guinea-Bissau's urban areas, the city of Gabu is characterised by significant ethnic heterogeneity: most of the country's ethnic groups, in addition to people of mixed ethnic origin, can be found in significant numbers there. However, in the villages that dot the rural parts of this region, a different story applies: in

<sup>158</sup> The five sectors that make up the administrative region of Gabu are shown in a lighter tone. Braima Sori is indicated by a red dot, at a distance of about 15kms from the city of Gabu (in blue). The black dot indicates the capital, Bissau. Source: adapted from Ganó and Caldas (1999)

eastern Guinea-Bissau, and the Gabu region in particular, the vast majority of the non-urban population is of either Fula or Mandinga descent.

These two ethnic groups originated in the hinterland of the African continent, and their original expansion into the eastern part of present-day Guinea-Bissau took place in the 13<sup>th</sup> (Mandinga) and 15<sup>th</sup> (Fula) Centuries (Lopes 1987:10). The process often took on a violent character, as these two groups waged numerous wars, both against the 'local' groups and amongst themselves, for supremacy and territorial control in the region (Galli and Jones 1987:11). The Battle of Kansala, which was waged between the Fula and the Mandinga, and brought on the downfall of the Mandinga Kingdom of Kaabu (as well as the conversion of the Mandinga to Islam), was waged as late as the mid-19<sup>th</sup> Century (1867) (Forrest 1992:11).

The regional capital is the city of Gabu, which in the colonial era went by the name of Nova Lamego. It is the only city of any sizeable importance in the region, but since independence in 1973-74 it has gradually risen to the status of second most important city in the country in economic terms. This is due to its strategic location as a gateway to the Republic of Guinea to the east, with which eastern Guinea-Bissau maintains important commercial linkages – largely associated with the Fula, who straddle the two countries and have a long tradition of engaging in commerce (see below). The main road in this region is the one linking Bissau with Gabu (at a distance of about 160 km), which then extends eastwards towards the border with the Republic of Guinea. Secondary dirt tracks extend laterally from this main East-West axis, the two main ones heading southward to Boé and northward to Pirada.

The region is characterised by its relatively dry landscape, with an average annual rainfall under 1400 mm (Indjai 2002:72). There are a few minor rivers, but only one – the Corubal, in the remote southern part of the region – of some importance. River transport is therefore of lesser importance here than is the case in the Cacheu region. In terms of its relief, the region of Gabu basically consists of a very flat plateau that lies between the (lower) Bafatá plateau to the West and the Fouta Djallon highlands to the East (in the Republic of Guinea). Only in the Boé sector are any significant hills discernible, reaching a maximum altitude of 300m (the highest point in Guinea-Bissau). This region is considerably more arid than the coastal areas of Guinea-Bissau. Whereas subtropical and palm tree forests abound in the latter, the dominant ecosystem in the Gabu region is the so-called Guinean forest-savannah mosaic. In the savannah parts of this mosaic, an herbaceous layer

is punctuated by relatively sparse trees (acacias, baobabs, etc). Then, in certain areas where tree density is higher, usually due to greater water availability, this gives way to patches of denser forest. Landscape transformation for the purpose of agriculture has taken place to a more limited extent than in the coastal areas, and some of the most remote parts of the region still feature large wild mammals. Where landscape changes caused by human activity are most apparent is in the immediate vicinity of the villages and along the roads and tracks, where the wild vegetation has often been cleared to give way to cashew groves, groundnut fields and other crops.

Generally speaking, there is greater livelihood diversification away from agriculture in eastern Guinea-Bissau than is the case, for instance, in the region of Cacheu. Cattle-raising is a very important activity: the region is reputed as a provider of both meat and live cattle to the rest of the country. Due to the shortage of water during the dry season, transhumance is a common practice, and usually involves moving the herds to the vicinity of the Geba River near Bafatá. Additionally, many people, particularly those belonging to the Fula ethnic group, engage in local and/or inter-regional commerce as either their main source of income or as a form of livelihood diversification. The latter practice is especially visible as of the *lumos* (open-air markets) that, on certain dates, draw traders from across the region, and in some cases from the neighbouring countries, to specific locations (World Bank 2006:47-48). The main commercial hub is the city of Gabu itself, which also concentrates petty services and the region's incipient manufacturing.

Rice, maize, millet and sorghum constitute the main staples in the regional diet, which is more diversified away from rice than is the case elsewhere in Guinea-Bissau. The most important cash crops are cashew nuts and groundnuts. Cotton growing used to play an important role in the colonial era, but the areas occupied by this crop have been gradually taken over by cashew (id *ibid*: 47). Most agricultural ventures have a relatively small size, regardless of the extent to which they combine production for the market with production for self-consumption (Ganó and Caldas 1999). A few large-scale commercial farmers ("*ponteiros*") were allocated relatively large parcels in some parts of this region in the 1980s, but the process often took on a politically clientelist character instead of a productive rationale, and, as a result, many (perhaps most) of these holdings lie fallow (Pereira *et al* 1992).

The poverty situation in the Gabu as a whole is somewhat worse than in the country as a whole. The poverty headcount (under 2 USD/day) in the region in 2002 was

estimated at 65.8% (64.7% in the country as a whole), whereas the UNDP-computed human poverty index<sup>159</sup> was 58.2 (Guinea-Bissau: 45.6) (PNUD 2006:10). The literacy rate (14.1% in 2000) was much lower than the national average (32.0%) – especially amongst women (8.3% compared to 20.8%) (PNUD 2006:17). The latter is related to the widely-reported lesser willingness on the part of the Islamised communities in Guinea-Bissau (especially in rural areas) to have their children, particularly girls, attend formal, secular education.

### *8.1.2 The Fula*

The ethnic group that goes by the name of Fula in Guinea-Bissau is one of West Africa's most numerous and significant. Straddling around twenty countries in significant numbers, from as far west as Guinea-Bissau and Senegal to as far east as the Sudan and the Central African Republic, the Fula are known elsewhere by a variety of other names, including Fulani, Peul and Fulbe (Ndukwe 1996).

The original arrival of the Fula in the territory of present-day Guinea-Bissau took place in the 15<sup>th</sup> Century, when this nomadic pastoralist group began moving into the Geba-Corubal area with their herds (Galli and Jones 1987:19). As their numbers grew, conflicts became increasingly frequent between themselves and the other ethnic groups present in the region. By the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, they had acquired political supremacy in the region, and eventually played a central role in the defeat and conversion of the Mandinga (id *ibid*).

Originally a nomadic pastoralist group – which they remain in other places –, the Fula have largely become settled agropastoralists in the Bissau-Guinean context – although they still exhibit significant levels of mobility, most apparent in their transhumance and itinerant commercial practices. Their nomadic past, alongside the relatively recent character of their presence in the country and the on-going Fula in-migration from the Futa Djallon area in the Republic of Guinea, explain why many Bissau-Guineans regard and speak of the Fula, in more or less xenophobic terms, as foreigners – or at least as “less Bissau-Guinean” than themselves<sup>160</sup>. This is in spite of – or perhaps partly due to – the fact that, by now, the Fula surely account for a greater share of the country's population than the 23% estimated in 1979 (Galli and Jones 1987:xiii; World Bank 2006:1).

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<sup>159</sup> The human poverty index takes into account the adult illiteracy rate, the probability at birth of not surviving to age 40, the level of access to an improved water source and the share of underweight infants to reflect the standard of living and extent of deprivation in a country (PNUD 2006:99-100).

<sup>160</sup> Source: numerous informal interviews and conversations in Bissau.

The Fula converted to Islam centuries ago and, through their *jihad* campaigns, played a pivotal role in the dissemination of Islam in West Africa (Brito 1957:166). To this day, the basic precepts of Islam are quite widely followed by the Fula of Guinea-Bissau. In eastern Guinea-Bissau, all Fula villages have a mosque, or at least a basic place of worship, and one or more persons who fulfil the role of *imam*. Additionally, certain villages are known for their *marabouts*, or Islamic teachers/scholars, who provide guidance and religious teaching. It should be noted, however, that as far as popular (“folk”) spirituality goes, the mindset and cultural practices of most Muslims in Guinea-Bissau syncretically incorporate Animist elements as well – particularly as regards the scope for ‘magical’ interaction between people and the spirit world.

Among the practices forbidden by Islam, one which assumes special significance in the context of economic development is that of usury, sometimes understood as any lending with interest. In the context of the qualitative interviews undertaken in Braima Sori in the context of this research, we were unable to detect any evidence of the respondents’ engagement in either the lending or borrowing of credit: in the event of extraordinary hardship, households in distress were reported to benefit from the assistance of others in the community under the guise of *zakat*, or Islamic charity.

Alongside the Mandinga, the Fula have been depicted as exhibiting the most “advanced class-based” form of social organisation amongst the various Bissau-Guinean ethnic groups – e.g. compared to the “acephalous” or “horizontal” society of the Balanta or the “intermediate” situation of the Manjaco, who find themselves somewhere halfway in between in terms of this classification (Lopes 1987:14). This depiction is largely due to two aspects: on the one hand, the fact that, up until the onset of effective colonialism, Fula kingships were part of larger political-territorial entities, which often exhibited empire-like properties; on the other hand, the fact that the Fula, at least in this region, used to be divided into ‘castes’ – “slaves” and “nobility” – a split that has seemingly lost most of its political-economic effectiveness, but which retains at least symbolic significance (albeit possibly a residual one) (Forrest 1992:12).

The “vertical” hierarchical organisation of the Fula made them especially liable to cooption by the Portuguese colonisers, who not only struck deals with Fula groups with a view to having the latter fight on their behalf against other indigenous groups during the ‘pacification’ campaigns of the late 1800s and early 1900s, but also placed Fula chiefs in charge of various regions later on, effectively as a form of ‘indirect rule’ on behalf of the



colonial authorities (Forrest 1992:17). Basically, the Fula's hierarchical form of social organisation and allegiance to an Abrahamic religion rendered them both more palatable to the racist ideology of the colonisers and easier to control (through coercion or cooption of the chiefs) than was the case with the coastal Animist groups. Indeed, many Fula chiefs wielded significant power over their subjects and territory during colonial times, and for that reason the cause of independence was significantly less popular there than among the ethnic-social groups that constituted the core of the PAIGC: urban *declassés* and Animist peasants, who bore the brunt of direct colonial violence and exploitation (Lopes 1987). Thus, during the colonial/independence war waged between the Portuguese colonial army and the PAIGC between 1963 and 1974, few Fula joined the ranks of the independence fighters, while they constituted a large share of the indigenous combatants who fought on the side of the colonialists.

The latter was a consequence of the fact that the socioeconomic structures of the Fula, as well as their somewhat privileged relationship with the Portuguese colonisers, rendered the members of this ethnic group less willing to adhere to the aims and objectives of the independence struggle; and of the fact that the effort on the part of the PAIGC cadres to win over the population to their side did not spend much time in trying to persuade the Fula, given their own acknowledgement of the above (namely in the context of Cabral's analysis of the class structure and material interests of the various constitutive elements of the Bissau-Guinean society: id *ibid*). However much of a self-fulfilling prophecy this may have been, the fact of the matter is that, after independence, many Fula were to pay dearly for all of this: thousands, including Fula chieftains and certainly many of those who fought on the Portuguese side and did not flee the country, were summarily executed<sup>161</sup>.

While 'nobility' has lost nearly all of its political-economic relevance, a much more effective and visible source of power and inequality among the Fula of Guinea-Bissau is to be found in patriarchy. There is no doubt that the Fula of Guinea-Bissau are fundamentally a patriarchal society, in which male patriarchs exert authority over their extended families. These are usually larger units than is the case, for example, among the Manjaco, seemingly due to the fact that emancipation occurs at a later stage and less frequently: even after marriage, many sons/siblings remain a part of the same household as their fathers or older brothers, and for many purposes subject to the authority of the latter. But patriarchy also

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<sup>161</sup> Interview no.1.

means that women are subject to domination and exploitation in a variety of ways. As is the case among the Manjaco, household chores fall disproportionately upon women. Polygamy is a widely adopted practice – as made allowance for by Islam – and arranged marriages are quite common. Moreover, female genital mutilation reportedly remains a widespread practice<sup>162</sup>.

As mentioned above, the main productive activities practised by the Fula of Guinea-Bissau consist of agriculture, cattle-herding and commerce. In rural contexts, these are usually adopted in conjunction, in accordance with a logic of diversification and complementarity – not least because, unlike amongst the Animist groups of Guinea-Bissau, animal traction is quite widely used in agriculture by the Fula. With respect to commerce, it is worth noting that the influence of the Fula extends far beyond their Bissau-Guinean heartland in the east, as this group in fact plays a central role in commercial activity throughout the country, including in the capital Bissau (where their predominance is more frequently challenged by Mauritanian, Lebanese and Conakry-Guinean traders than by other native Bissau-Guinean groups).

It is mostly in the context of the cattle-herding and commercial activities of the Fula that the roots of their current mobility practices are to be found – namely under the guise of transhumance, on the one hand, and itinerant traveling or commuting to buy and sell merchandise, on the other. The latter sometimes take on a transnational character and encompass other countries – especially Senegal, The Gambia and the Republic of Guinea, within the West Africa sub-region, but also Portugal (in the context of the post-colonial migration system that emerged after independence) and, more recently, some new destinations – particularly Spain. In this context, the Fula often play a central role in the context of the ‘nostalgia trade’ networks that link the areas of origin and destination of the migrants, providing Bissau-Guinean emigrants abroad with products from their home country, while at the same time importing clothing and other manufactured products into Guinea-Bissau.

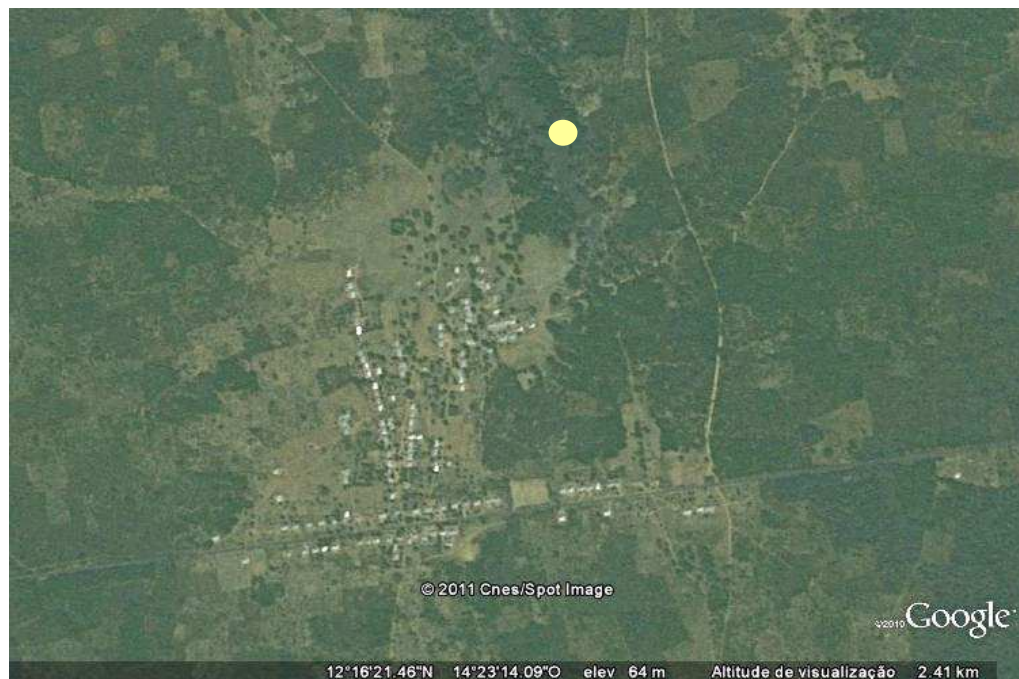
## ***8.2 Brief geographical characterisation***

Braima Sori lies on the side of the road that links Bissau with the city of Gabu, at a distance of around 16kms from the latter and 143kms from the former. About 5kms to the West on

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<sup>162</sup> [http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/guineabissau\\_41785.html](http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/guineabissau_41785.html)

the same road is Mafanco – another Fula village of about the same size and importance, which also has a significant history of participation in international migration. There is no organised regular transport between Braima Sori and Gabu: the residents who do not own their own means of transportation usually either catch a ride or hop on to one of the bush-taxis or vans running back and forth between Gabu and Bafatá (and thence Bissau). Given the good condition of the road, the drive between the village and the regional capital usually takes less than fifteen minutes.



**Figure 8.2 Satellite image of Braima Sori<sup>163</sup>**

The village layout does not reflect any particular form of socio-spatial organisation: there is no central ground, nor is the village divided into ‘wards’ or ‘quarters’. About one third of the village houses are spread out along a 800m stretch of the tarmac road, whereas the rest are to be found further away from the road, along a couple of dirt tracks that depart from the main road and extend northward for about 700m. The parcels used for growing groundnuts, millet and cassava can be found both within the village itself and in its immediate vicinity – these are the lighter patches of land in Figure 8.2. Further away from the village, we find the residents’ cashew groves. Importantly, the nearest patches of

<sup>163</sup> The Bissau-Gabu road is visible as a straight line running from left to right in the lower part of the picture. The housing units that make up the village are clustered along the road on both sides and extend away from the road towards the North. The darker area indicated by a (superposed) yellow circle to the North is a river bed, where many residents of Braima Sori have their vegetable gardens. Source: Google Earth, adapted.

unclaimed bush, which can be cleared and put to productive use by anyone willing to do so, are not more than two or three kilometres away from the village. This shows quite clearly that the demographic pressure upon the land in this area is much less intense than in other parts of Guinea-Bissau (Caiomete, for example).

During the dry season (November to May), Braima Sori suffers from quite serious water shortage problems. A handful of water pumps, which draw on underground aquifers at a greater depth than traditional wells, have been installed with technical and financial support from development NGOs. However, several of these have broken down and are no longer operational. In any case, during those months the water is insufficient for either providing the herds with water (hence the need for transhumance) or for growing garden vegetables that require a greater amount of water. Thus, the residents grow these in a river bed (Figures 8.2 and 8.3) located at a distance of about 300m to the north of the village. Even when the river bed is dry, the aquifer there is closer to the surface, making it easier to access the water.



**Figure 8.3: Vegetable gardens in a river bed outside Braima Sori<sup>164</sup>**

Braima Sori is a smaller village than Caiomete, and this, alongside the fact that many shops and services are easily accessible in the city of Gabu, accounts for there being a

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<sup>164</sup> The relatively lush scenario, in a region where the more arid savannah-forest mosaic is predominant, is due to the relative abundance of water in this specific site. Source: photograph by the author, May 24 2010.

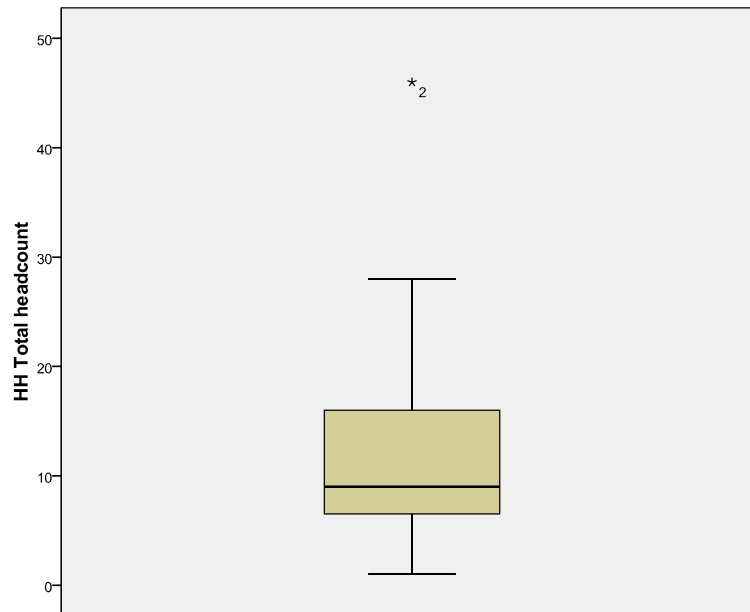
much lesser local supply of services and commerce. Indeed, that supply is limited to two small village shops, a primary school and a small mosque.

### 8.3 Demography

Based on the results of the household survey, the total resident population of Braima Sori can be estimated at 1,326 (Table 8.1). These residents are divided into a total of 108 households (stoves), which makes for a mean household size of about 12 (the median is nine persons per household: Figure 8.4). That is to say, the average household size is significantly larger than is the case in Caiomete. At least two factors account for this: first, it is never the case in Braima Sori that a man's various wives are separated into quasi-autonomous stoves; second, emancipation through the constitution of a separate stove usually occurs at a later stage in life than is the case amongst the Manjaco of Caiomete, or not at all: it is often the case that very large extended families (up to a maximum of forty-five people, among the households in the sample) constitute a single relatively autonomous unit of production and consumption under the authority of a single patriarch. In this predominantly agropastoralist society, this implies that the herds and fields are owned 'jointly' by the various people in the household, household labour is 'pooled in' and allocated to working in those fields and herding those animals, and the resulting output is used to meet the needs of the entire household (always subject to patriarchal authority and its associated kin-based exploitation).

	Sample	Estimated Total
<b>Males (15 and older)</b>	85	255
<b>Females (15 and older)</b>	129	387
<b>Under 15s</b>	228	684
<b>Total resident population</b>	442	1326
<b>Sex ratio (15 and older, males to 100 females)</b>	65.9	
<b>Self-reported literacy rate (males, 15 and older)</b>	69.4%	
<b>Self-reported literacy rate (females, 15 and older)</b>	24.8%	
<b>Self-reported literacy rate (total, 15 and older)</b>	42.5%	
<b>Male migrants (age known and over 15)</b>	47	141
<b>Female migrants (age known and over 15)</b>	13	39
<b>Migrants (total)</b>	77	221

Table 8.1 Braima Sori: Basic demographic indicators



**Figure 8.4 Braima Sori: Household size distribution, boxplot**

The results of the survey indicate that Braima Sori has a very youthful resident population, even for Bissau-Guinean standards: 106.5 youths under the age of 15 were reported for every hundred people aged 15 or older, in contrast to Guinea-Bissau's 73.8 (INEC 2010:1). In order to account for this difference, it is useful to begin by computing the same statistic for the sum of Braima Sori's resident and migrant populations, in order to ascertain whether the youthful age structure is due to the age structure of the migrants. This exercise yields a ratio of 88.1 under-15s for every hundred >15s, suggesting that the age structure of the migrants is heavily skewed in favour of the over-fifteens and exerts a very substantial impact upon the age structure of Braima Sori, *but also* that this factor alone does not fully account for the youthful age structure of this population. Seemingly, thus, the explanation lies in a higher than average fertility rate over the last couple of decades, although any solid conclusions on this matter would require additional information.

Another demographic indicator upon which out-migration has had an even more decisive impact is the sex-ratio. The number of men over the age of 15 for every hundred women in the same age group is 66 (compared to 60 in Caiomete and 94 in Guinea-Bissau as a whole). However, whereas the sex-ratio of Caiomete's out-migrant population was unable to account for that village's heavily feminised population, a different story applies in the case of Braima Sori: if we add the 141 male migrants and 39 female migrants over the age of 15 identified in the sample to the 255 male and 387 female village residents in the

same age group, we find that the sex-ratio nearly levels out, at 98.5 men per hundred women.

This youthful and ‘feminised’ population exhibits two additional characteristics that can be usefully highlighted. On the one hand, it is a very homogeneous population in terms of its ethnic background. Out of the 442 persons reported by the respondents in the sample as currently residing in Braima Sori, only one person – a Mauritanian merchant – was not of Fula descent. The other notable feature concerns the level of literacy. The total self-reported literacy rate for persons over the age of 15 is 42.5% (69.4% for men, 24.8% for women), which compares unfavourably to the rates that were computed for the village of Caiomete. However, this should not come as a surprise, given that the Islamised population of eastern Guinea-Bissau consistently exhibits below-average literacy levels. In fact, in the context of the Gabu region – where the total literacy rate in 2000 was as low as 14.1% (PNUD 2006:17) –, the literacy rate in Braima Sori may be deemed a relative achievement.

#### **8.4 Livelihood strategies**

According to the results of the household survey, most Braima Sori households adopt a combination of different livelihood strategies, key among which are agriculture (both for household consumption and destined for the market), the herding and occasional sale of cattle, and commerce. As far as agriculture is concerned, there are two main cash crops – groundnuts and cashew nuts – and a few important food crops – millet, maize, cassava, paddy rice and garden vegetables. The hiring-out of labour plays a secondary role as a livelihood strategy for the residents of this village, as does the provision of petty services as commodities. The rest of this section elaborates further on each of those aspects and substantiates them with quantitative and qualitative data.

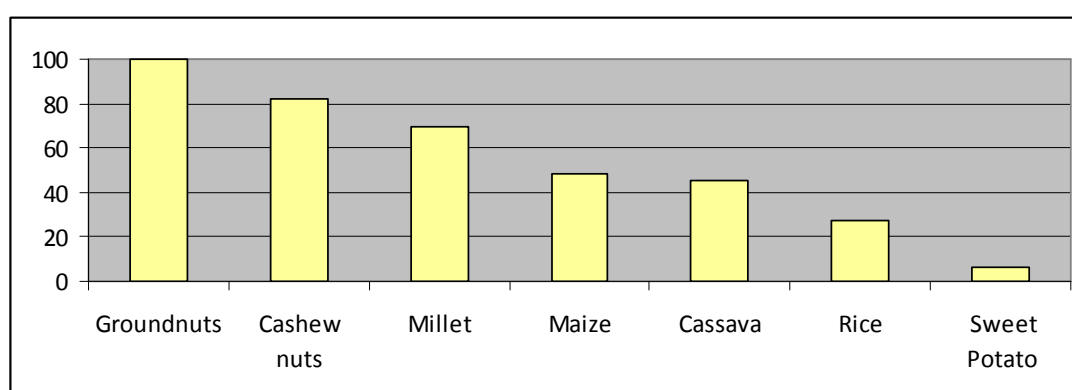
Table 8.2 provides evidence on the prevalence of the main local crops<sup>165</sup>, by indicating the share of households in the sample that reported harvesting them in the previous agricultural cycle. Three respondents reported not engaging in any agricultural activity: one was a Mauritanian trader who relies exclusively on his merchant activity, the other two were Fula households who live exclusively off money remittances sent by

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<sup>165</sup> The selection of the crops with regard to which detailed questions were asked (on the quantities produced and their respective use) was based on *a priori* information regarding the main crops in the region as a whole. Most were indeed found to play an important role in this local context, others less so.



migrant relatives (a relevant piece of information to which we shall return below). For the remaining 33 households, the most widespread crops are groundnuts (grown by all the households that practice agriculture) and cashew nuts (harvested by 82% of those households). Millet is grown by 70% of farming households, maize by 48%, cassava by 45% and paddy rice by 27%. Sweet potato, which constitute a very prevalent and important crop in the Bambadinca region (about 80kms to the West), are reportedly grown by only two households in this sample. Upland rice, or *n’pampam*, was reportedly not grown in the previous year by any of the respondent households.



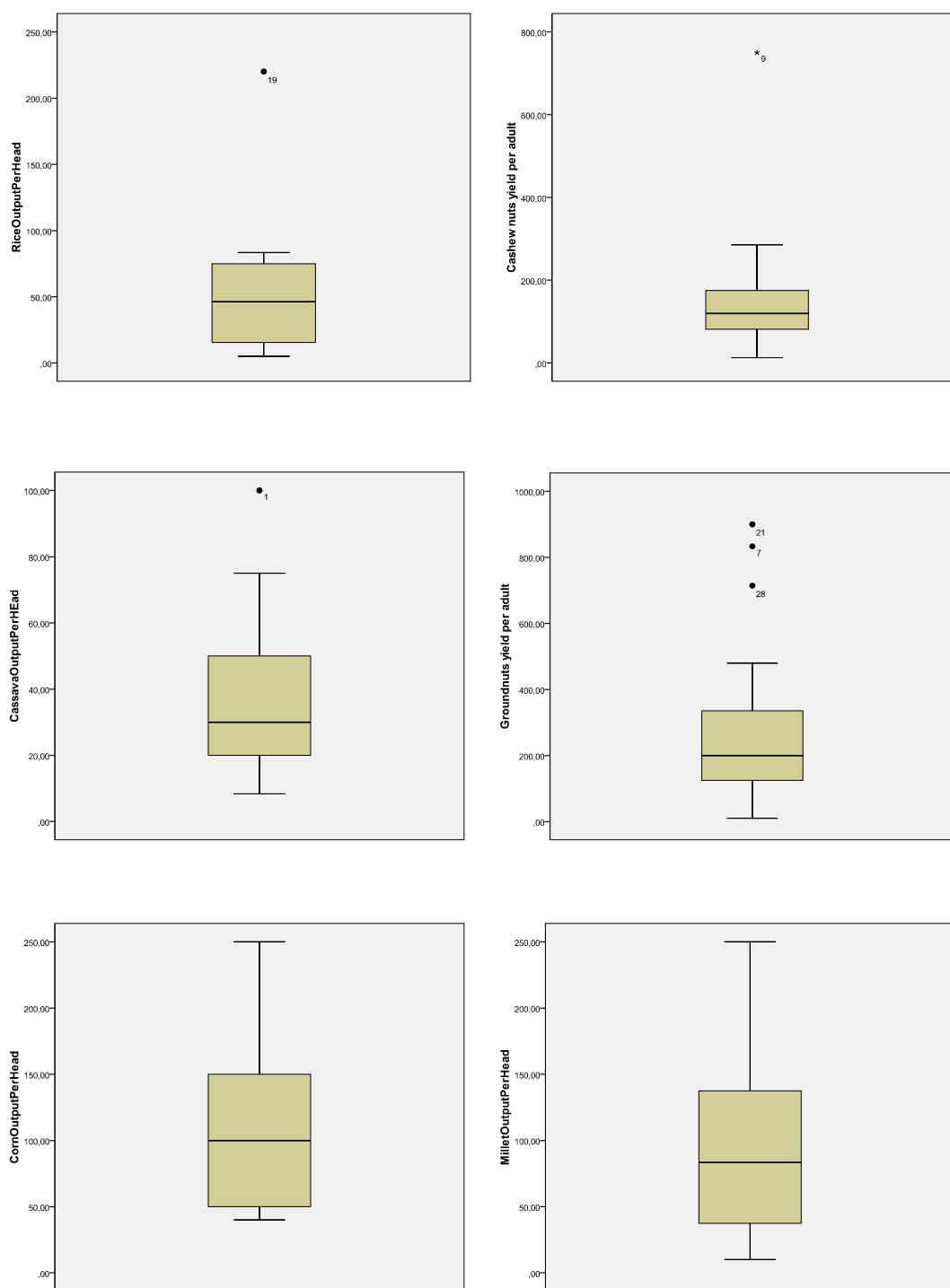
**Figure 8.5 Braima Sori: Share of farming households that grew/harvested various crops as of the last agricultural cycle (%)**

Figure 8.5 provides clear evidence as to the degree of crop diversification that characterises agricultural activity in Braima Sori: three crops are grown by a majority of the households and a further three are relatively widespread, suggesting much greater resilience than is the case in contexts characterised by the reliance upon only one or two crops. However, ascertaining the role and significance of each of these crops requires that we examine some additional data. Figure 8.6 shows, for each of these crops, the reported use of the households’ last harvest. We find that paddy rice, maize and millet are solely destined for household consumption, whereas groundnuts and cashew nuts are primarily produced for the market (although groundnuts are also consumed by a majority of the households that grow them). Cassava is basically grown for household consumption, but a couple of households report growing it in order to sell it. In the case of the two crops that are mostly destined for the market, we find that monetised sale is a much more widespread practice than barter – the latter is only reported in the case of cashew nuts, and only by around one third of the households that harvest this crop (whereas five sixths of those households report selling it).





**Figure 8.6 Braima Sori: Reported use of the households' previous harvests of various crops (clockwise from top left: paddy rice, cashew nuts, groundnuts, millet, maize and cassava)**



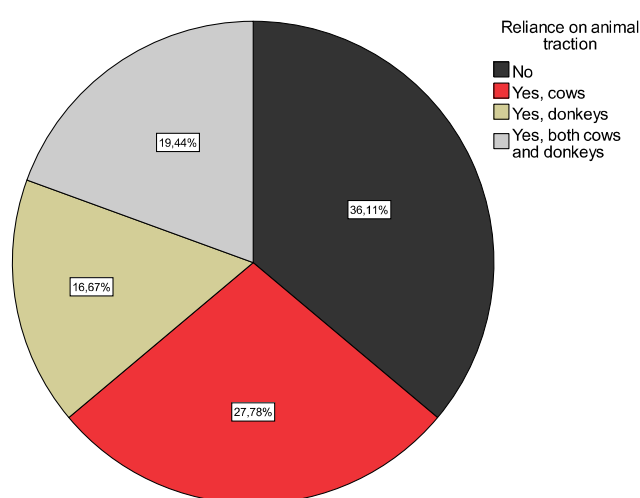
**Figure 8.7 Braima Sori: Distribution of crop outputs per adult household member as of the previous harvest (clockwise from top left: paddy rice, cashew nuts, groundnuts, millet, maize and cassava), boxplots<sup>166</sup>**

In its turn, Figure 8.7 (above) provides information with respect to the output of each crop (per adult household member) as of the last agricultural cycle. It conveys some important pieces of information: first, we find a fair degree of homogeneity amongst the

<sup>166</sup> Only households producing each crop included in each case.

households producing each crop (albeit less so than in Caiomete), with only one or two outliers (which are never the same) appearing in each case. Second, we find that maize and millet, the food crops grown by the largest number of households, are also the ones for which the mean output per adult household member is greatest, indicating that these are indeed the key food crops in this village. Third, groundnuts are seemingly produced in somewhat greater quantities than cashew nuts, which, in addition to the greater prevalence of the former crop (100% of the households that practise agriculture grow and harvest them, compared to 82% for cashew nuts), suggests that groundnuts probably constitute the single most important agricultural source of income from farming in this village (especially if take into account the usually higher price per kilo of groundnuts compared to cashew nuts, as reported in AEDES 2005).

On average, the output of cashew nuts per adult household member in Braima Sori is larger than is the case in Caiomete – and yet, the former households manage to do that while also growing another cash crop to an even more significant extent, as well as a greater number of food crops. When we take all of this into account, it becomes apparent that Braima Sori boasts a significantly more productive agriculture. This can be accounted for by reference to at least three factors: i) the abundance of land; ii) the greater recourse to the hiring-in of agricultural wage labour; and iii) the use of animal traction in agriculture. We shall return to the first two factors below. For now, it is useful to focus on the third one, to highlight the fact that as many as 2/3 of the households of Braima Sori that practice agriculture report using animal traction in the context of their agricultural activity: 28% of the households use oxen, 17% use donkeys and 20% use both (Figure 8.7).



**Figure 8.8 Braima Sori: Reliance on animal traction**

The high level of reliance on animal traction is associated with an also high degree of ownership of agricultural tools meant to be pulled by animals: 45% of farming households own ploughs, 27% own weeders and 15% own seeders (Table 8.2). All of the above are designed to rely on animal traction, reduce the human work load per unit of surface and thus make it possible to cultivate larger parcels of land and attain greater outputs. Moreover, the level of ownership of the agricultural means of production included in Table 8.2 actually underestimates their use, because it is reportedly not uncommon for relatives, friends and neighbours to occasionally lend each other some of these tools. Instances of *rental* of these means of production (plough, weeder, seeder, cart) were not reported, but at least one of the wealthier farmers reported leasing a tractor in order to use it in his rice paddies in the Bafatá region.

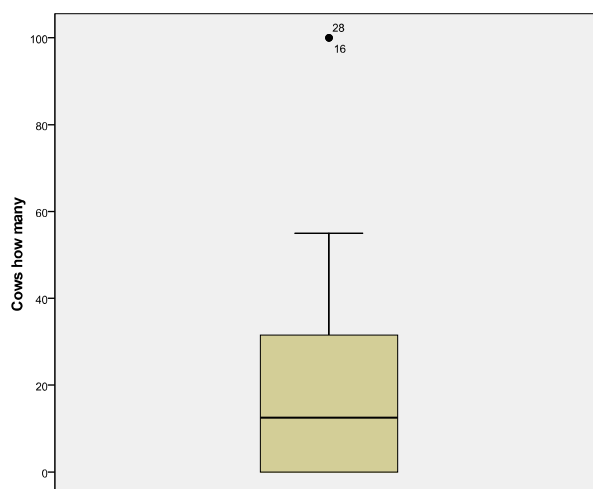
	Frequency	Percentage of farming households
<b>Plough</b>	15	45%
<b>Weeder</b>	9	27%
<b>Seeder</b>	5	15%
<b>Cart</b>	5	15%
<b>Tractor</b>	0	0%

**Table 8.2 Braima Sori: Ownership of selected agricultural animal-powered tools**

Summing up, any analysis of agricultural activity in Braima Sori should begin by emphasising its diversified character and the relatively large crop outputs attained there, which are seemingly due to a combination of factors (abundance of land, use of animal traction and tools, reliance on hired labour). Production for the household's own consumption is quite substantial and itself quite diversified, but on the whole it seems that cash crops play a more important role: not only do the latter constitute a more widespread practice, they also exhibit greater median and maximum outputs than is the case for any of the food crops.

There are other important livelihood strategies in Braima Sori beyond agriculture, however. One of those strategies is the herding and selling of cattle. According to the survey, as many as 20 households (56%) own cattle. The average herd size is 20 and the largest reported herd contains one hundred cattle (Figure 8.8). With such large herds, it is scarcely surprising that eleven households report having sold at least one cattle head in the previous twelve months – a practice that seldom occurs in Caiomete. In fact, one of the

respondents reported selling as many as twelve cattle heads<sup>167</sup>, although most of those households only sold one or two.



**Figure 8.9 Braima Sori: Number of cattle heads owned by the households, boxplot**

Next in the list of the most widespread livelihood strategies is commerce, understood as the buying and selling of commodities with a view to making a profit. This activity was reported by ten out of 36 households in the sample (Table 8.3).

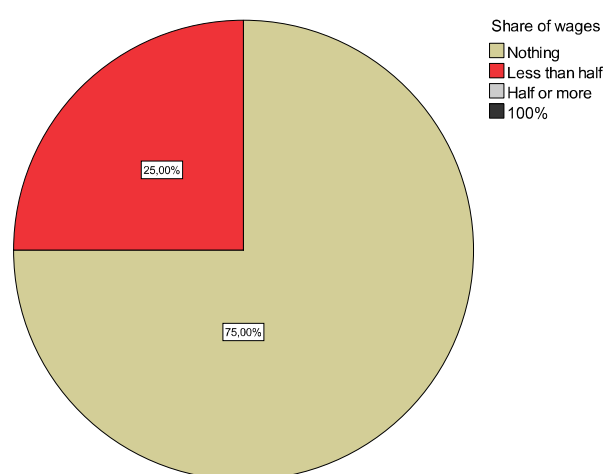
	n	%
<b>Sale of other primary products</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>8%</b>
Garden vegetables	2	6%
Milk	1	3%
<b>Transfers from friends/relatives (excluding migrants)</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3%</b>
<b>Commerce</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>28%</b>
<b>Other</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>25%</b>
Charging of cell phones	2	6%
Self-employed mason	2	6%
Self-employed weaver	1	3%
Self-employed driver	2	6%
House rental	1	3%
Lorry rental	1	3%
<b>None</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>47%</b>

**Table 8.3 Braima Sori: Additional reported sources of household monetary income, overlapping categories**

<sup>167</sup> This amounts to a very significant stream of income, if we take into account that in Guinea-Bissau a cattle head costs on average 100,000-150,000 francs CFA, or £120-£200, depending on the location and the time of the year.

Curiously enough for a community and ethnic group for whom merchant activity is very widespread as an occupation and source of income, small retail commerce in the two village shops is undertaken by Mauritanian merchants, not the autochthonous Fula. Instead, the commercial activity to which the respondent Fula households are referring to consists of either itinerant retail commerce throughout rural Guinea-Bissau (selling clothes, shoes and other small merchandise, often on a bicycle), or the buying and selling of commodities on a larger scale, often involving their purchase in a different country and their sale in Gabu or Bissau.

Working for other people in exchange for a wage, i.e. the hiring-out of wage labour, plays a secondary role as a livelihood strategy. Not more than nine out of the 36 respondents included in the sample reported that someone in their respective households had engaged in it in the previous twelve months. Moreover, in every one of those households, wages accounted for less than half of the total monetary income (Figure 8.10). Even more significantly, very few *individuals* over the age of 15 were reported as having engaged in the hiring-out of wage labour in the previous twelve months: out of 214 adult household members reported by the 36 respondents, only seven worked for a wage for employers within the village in the previous year and only six did so for non-residents. Additionally, if we examine in more detail which tasks it was that the people in question were hired to perform, we find a predominance of off-farm activities like masonry, painting and driving – only two people were reported to have been hired by others to perform agricultural tasks.



**Figure 8.10 Braima Sori: Share of wages in the households' total monetary income in the previous 12 months**

A source of monetary income which does play a very important role in the context of Braima Sori consists of money remittances. The survey did not seek to collect systematic information on the *amounts* received from the migrant relatives, but it is telling that 61% of respondent households (and as many as 85% of households with migrants currently away) reported receiving money remittances in the previous twelve months. Additionally, two households did not report any other source of monetary income besides money remittances, which provides an important indication of the ability of remittances to sustain the livelihoods of Braima Sori households, but also of the fact that some households have become solely reliant upon them and have withdrawn from any other productive activity (see below).

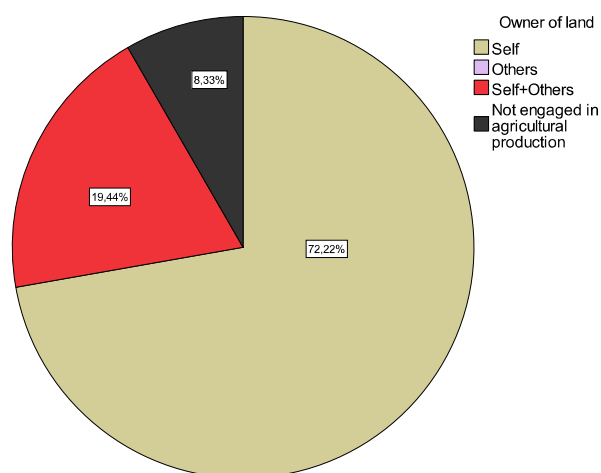
The remaining livelihood strategies and sources of monetary income reported by the respondents to the survey are the ones included in Table 8.4 that we have not yet mentioned. These consist of instances of simple commodity production of either services (self-employed masonry, weaving or the charging of cell phones) or farm goods (milk, garden vegetables). Whatever their character, however, they have relatively minor importance – although two cases are particularly interesting due to being indicative of a relatively high degree of affluence: one respondent reported earning income from the rental of a house in Bissau and another reported renting out his lorry.

### **8.5 Social-productive arrangements**

The previous section showed that, along with migration, the market sale of agricultural produce constitutes the single main livelihood strategy of the households of Braima Sori, even though the latter is virtually always complemented by production for the household's own consumption. If we now turn to how agricultural production is organised, we find that, in the majority of the cases, it draws primarily on the household's own provision of both labour and land.

Primary reliance upon the household's own resources is apparent, first of all, in the fact that most farming households (78%) only work their own land, and not a single household reported using solely other people's land (Figure 8.11). The remaining 22%, therefore, used both their own and others' land in their agricultural activity. Of these, four paid some form of rent: two in cash, two in the form of a share of the output. Crucially, however, these do not consist of relatively more destitute households – rather, these are

relatively *wealthier* households, which engage in agricultural production not only in and around the village but also in leased rice paddies in the Bafatá region, where the water is more abundant.



**Figure 8.11 Braima Sori: Ownership of the land in which the households practice agriculture**

The fact that a local vernacular rental market for land is absent in Braima Sori is a consequence of the fact that the demographic pressure upon the land is relatively low and the ‘natural frontier’ has not been exhausted. Not a single household is landless, simply because it only takes getting some 3kms away from the village in order to come across unclaimed bush, which can be claimed and productively used by anyone willing to clear it and work it. For the same reason, not one respondent reported having ever sold land, or anyone in their household having done so. The conclusion is that there certainly does not seem to be any pressure towards the proletarianisation of Braima Sori households associated with the risk or actuality of landlessness. In its turn, this then translates into the small number of households that report hiring out labour – for the latter is undertaken out of opportunity, not necessity.

In view of the above, it is not surprising that the hiring-*in* of labour that takes place in Braima Sori relies significantly more on labourers from outside the village than on local workers (Table 8.4): seven out of the 33 farming households reported hiring someone from the village to undertake agricultural work in the previous twelve months, but as many as 18 (55%) hired a non-resident at some time in the previous year<sup>168</sup>. More importantly, if we

<sup>168</sup> As indicated by several respondents, these typically hail from the Republic of Guinea, about 70kms to the east.



cross-tabulate the hiring-out of labour and the hiring-in of agricultural labour (Table 8.5), we find that most (seven out of nine) of the households that hired out their labour also hired *in* agricultural workers and, for that reason among others, can hardly be regarded as a rural proletariat<sup>169</sup>.

		Hiring-in of outsiders in agriculture Y/N			Total
		No	Yes	Did not engage in agricultural production	
Hiring-in of locals in agriculture Y/N	No	12	14	0	26
	Yes	3	4	0	7
	Did not engage in agricultural production	0	0	3	3
Total		15	18	3	36

**Table 8.4 Braima Sori: Cross-tabulation of paid hiring-in of residents of Braima Sori and non-residents for performing agricultural tasks in the previous 12 months, absolute frequencies (households) occurring in the sample**

		Hiring-out of labour		Total
		No	Yes	
Agricultural hiring-in	No	13	2	15
	Yes	11	7	18
	Not applicable (no agricultural production)	3	0	3
Total		27	9	36

**Table 8.5 Braima Sori: Cross-tabulation of paid hiring-in of agricultural labour with the hiring-out of labour in the previous 12 months, absolute frequencies (households) occurring in the sample**

From these data gradually emerges a picture of Braima Sori as a relatively affluent village that has attained a significant degree of class differentiation, but more in the sense of differentiating itself as a whole from the surrounding region than in the sense of its population becoming more internally dissimilar through upward and/or downward class differentiation. When it comes to their participation in the labour market, Braima Sori households are much more likely to be employers (18/36) than providers (9/36) of labour,

<sup>169</sup> Among the nine households that hired out their labour, only two reported performing agricultural tasks – most of the others performed various tasks associated with construction (masonry, carpentry, etc.).

and those households in which someone did work for a wage also, for the most part (7/9), hired in labour at some time during the previous year. Moreover, the two households that only provided labour and did not hire anyone still share two universal characteristics of the households included in the sample: they are neither landless nor reliant on wages as their main source of monetary income. A conclusion can therefore be confidently put forth that the possibility of Braima Sori contributing to the furthering of agrarian capitalist social-productive arrangements, whether locally or regionally, through the provision of rural proletarian labour supplies is very much out of the question.

The signs of an emergent quasi-bourgeoisie, by contrast, look more convincing. When we look at the specific tasks that labourers were hired-in to perform (Table 8.7), we find a clear predominance of farm activities – especially agricultural ones (weeding the groundnut fields, clearing the cashew groves before the harvesting season, etc.) but also the herding of cattle. Almost all of these farm tasks took place in the context of the production of use-values that eventually became *commodities*<sup>170</sup>. There is therefore substantial evidence of commodity valorisation going on in the context of capitalist social-productive arrangements, particularly in agriculture. Certainly, this makes for a much more dynamic picture from the point of view of class differentiation and the transition to capitalism than is the case in Caiomete.

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<sup>170</sup> The same does not hold when it comes to the hiring-in of non-agricultural labour: with the exception of two households that reported hiring people as drivers in the context of their commercial activities, all the remaining non-agricultural hiring-in consisted of hiring by the employers as final consumers.

Hiring-in (tasks)	n	% of total no. of households (36)
<b>Farm activities - agricultural</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>47%</b>
Weeding	13	36%
Clearing the bush	6	17%
Ploughing	4	11%
Harvesting	2	6%
<b>Farm activities - non-agricultural</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>8%</b>
Herding cattle	3	8%
<b>Off-farm: construction/repairs</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>36%</b>
Mason	10	28%
Carpenter	6	17%
Other	3	8%
<b>Other off-farm</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>11%</b>
Gathering wood	2	6%
Driver	2	6%

**Table 8.6 Braima Sori: Tasks that non-household members were hired-in to perform in the previous 12 months, overlapping categories**

These conclusions regarding the hiring-in of labour should not obfuscate the facts that around one half of the households in the sample rely solely on the work provided by the household members themselves in the context of their agricultural activities, and that many of the households that do hire-in only do so at specific moments in the agricultural cycle (especially weeding the fields). That is to say, the amount and significance of the capitalist hiring-in of labour are certainly greater than is the case in Caiomete, but it remains true that most of the total social labour going into production in Braima Sori is provided through intra-household allocation of labour, not through the labour market. There are a couple of wealthier farmers in the sample that typically hire-in other people to do a variety of tasks and exhibit relatively large outputs, some of whom lease land far from Braima Sori for the purpose of commercial agriculture and often undertake relatively large-scale merchant activities on the side. These constitute Braima Sori's emergent agrarian 'bourgeoisie'. The remainder of the households, however, rely primarily on their own labour supply, which, as mentioned above, is basically subject to patriarchal age- and gender-based regulation within the household.

The last productive arrangement worth mentioning is a co-operative of around one hundred local producers who have decided to come together in order to improve their relatively water- and labour-demanding production of garden vegetables. This co-operative, which has a local and informal character, requires that prospective members join as a couple and pay a regular fee, in addition to sharing in the work burden. The co-operative's

vegetable gardens were set up in land belonging to the village chief, which is located in a river bed some 300m from the village (see Figures 8.2 and 8.3). The resulting produce is divided by the participants in the co-operative, whilst fees are collected by an appointed committee with a view to acquiring a water pump in the near future.

To sum up, this is a context in which simple commodity production is the predominant social-productive arrangement, but where frequent and relevant instances of capitalist wage labour can also be identified – particularly when it comes to the hiring-in of non-local agricultural labourers. Commodity production is complemented by production for the households' own consumption, but, overall, market mediation between production and consumption is by now clearly dominant. The production of use-values drawing on the households' own labour supply, whether destined for the market or for consumption by the household itself, is regulated according to patriarchal norms and authority. Unlike in Caiomete, it seems that any tributary arrangements that might have been formerly in existence have disappeared altogether. Finally, a producers' co-operative has been recently set up that brings together about a hundred residents for the purpose of producing garden vegetables, which are meant for the households' own consumption rather than market sale.

### ***8.6 Assets, wealth and poverty***

Braima Sori is a very affluent village for Bissau-Guinean standards. This is apparent to anyone who visits the village through such signs as the style and quality of the dwellings, or the fact that a fair number of cars, motorcycles and satellite TV dishes are visible around Braima Sori. The household survey confirms this impression: around 1/2 of the households own TVs, 1/5 own cars, more than 1/4 own diesel generators<sup>171</sup>, and almost all the households have zinc rooftops and own cell phones (Table 8.7). The mean asset index score in the village is 0.87, compared to -0.43 in Caiomete (bearing in mind that the asset index is built in such a way as to have zero mean and unit standard deviation within the overall sample of 108 households).

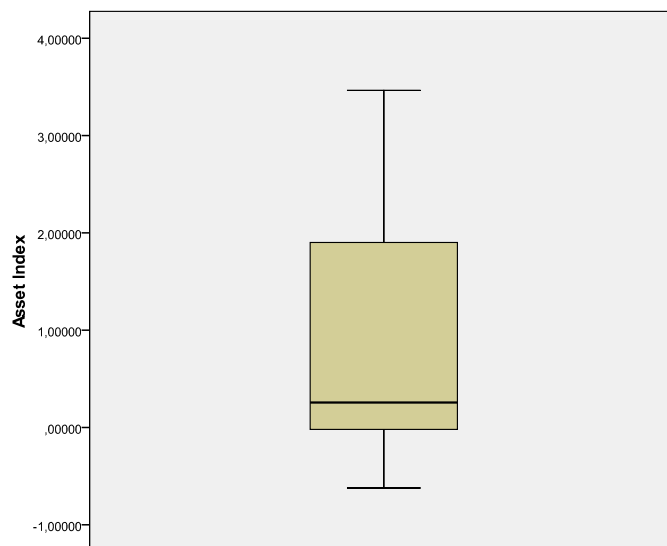
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<sup>171</sup> That more households own TVs than diesel generators, although the former require the latter in order to function, should not be regarded as incongruent: first, because for a few years and until around 2009, Braima Sori was one of the few villages in Guinea-Bissau that were connected to the public electricity network: a power station in Bafatá provided this city, Gabú and the villages along the road linking the two cities with electricity, although this ceased to be the case when some of the cables were stolen and the supply was cut off; second, it is not uncommon for migrants to buy TVs, DVDs and other electrical appliances, have them sent back to the village and stored, and only buy the diesel generators upon returning to the village.

	Frequency (Yes)	%
Cell phone	34	94%
Radio	31	86%
TV	17	47%
Gas or electric stove	2	6%
Fridge	10	28%
Bicycle	24	67%
Diesel generator	10	28%
Zinc rooftop	35	97%
Motorcycle	11	31%
Car	8	22%

**Table 8.7 Braima Sori: Ownership of durable household assets**

Besides illustrating the extent to which the Braima Sori household are on average wealthier than those of Caiomete, the asset index also makes it possible to make a number of inferences with regard to the correlates of relative wealth and poverty within each village. The first thing to be noted is that the index scores have much greater variance within the Braima Sori sub-sample (standard deviation = 1.18) than among Caiomete households (s.d. = 0.50). The same is to say, there is much greater evidence of wealth differentiation in this village (Figure 8.12).



**Figure 8.12 Braima Sori: Distribution of the asset index scores among the 36 households in the sample, boxplot**

What accounts for this variance? The analysis of the association between the asset index and a few other variables helps to render this clear. To begin with, the household

outputs of cashew nuts and groundnuts (the two main cash crops) are positively correlated with the asset index score, although the correlation coefficients are not particularly high (0.358 and 0.432, respectively). At any rate, unlike what is the case in Caiomete, there is evidence of enhanced agricultural production being associated with long-run household wealth in Braima Sori. The asset index score is also positively and significantly associated with the hiring-in of agricultural labour (Table 8.8): the 18 households that hired agricultural labour in the previous 12 months exhibit a mean asset index score of 1.31, compared to 0.60 among the 15 that did not. Of course, this raises issues of causality, for it is not immediately clear whether this reflects the fact that greater household wealth accrues to these households as a consequence of surplus extraction, or, alternatively, the fact that wealthier households can afford to hire others to perform some of the harder farm chores for them. In reality, there is likely to be a measure of truth to both statements.

	Yes	No	<i>p</i> -value of significance of differences (T-test, 2-tailed) <sup>172</sup>
Households currently participating in migration	0.922	0.731	0.685
Remittance-recipient households	0.977	0.699	0.501
Households that include former migrants	1.175	0.624	0.183
Households that include former international migrants	1.423	0.625	0.114
Households that include former migrants to Europe	1.518	0.739	0.218
Households that hired in agricultural labour in the previous year	1.312	0.595	0.071*
Households that hired out labour in the previous year	1.378	0.700	0.159
Female-headed households	0.888	0.858	0.944
Households that report earning part of their income from commerce	1.009	0.816	0.687

**Table 8.8 Brima Sori: Mean asset index score for selected subsamples of households in Braima Sori**

More surprising, however, is the fact that, contrary to what might be expected *a priori*, the hiring-out of labour, too, is associated with greater household wealth. In order to account for this, we need to recall that seven out of the nine households that hired out labour in Braima Sori also hired *in* and that, for that reason, these are not rural proletarian households, but rather rural households that combine simple commodity production in agriculture *and* paid work in other off-farm activities (masonry, carpentry, painting, etc.). It is the latter that appears as the hiring-out of wage labour in the survey – one which is mostly performed outside the village –, but it should not be confused with the selling of labour-power by destitute households that do not have anything else to live by. On the contrary, these households are actually wealthier than average – even in this relatively

<sup>172</sup> Note that due to the lower absolute number of households in the sample, and consequently in each sub-sample, compared to Caiomete, it is less often the case that the differences have low *p*-values even when the means differences are greater.

wealthy village – as a consequence of their relatively greater than average livelihood diversification.

The analysis of Table 8.8 also shows that, unlike in Caiomete, the gender of the head of the household is not a determinant of relative poverty. This is accounted for by the fact that in Braima Sori, virtually the only female-headed households are the ones in which the male ‘former’ head of household is away as a migrant, having left his wife ‘in charge’. Because most migrants from Braima Sori (especially international ones) enjoy a relatively privileged situation and show a high tendency to remit money back to their households of origin (see below), the consequence is that their female-headed households of origin do not appear to be more afflicted by poverty than male-headed ones. Basically, there is nothing in this context akin to the destitute and landless female-headed households of Caiomete.

Finally, Table 8.8 also suggests that both commerce and migration are also positively associated with greater household wealth. Those ten (out of 36) households that earned some of their income from commerce certainly seem wealthier than those that did not, although the difference is not as pronounced as in Caiomete. The effect of migration, however, is clearer: households that currently engage in migration are slightly wealthier than average, and this difference is even more pronounced among those that report having been sent remittances in the previous twelve months. Moreover, those households that have seen a migration cycle through to completion exhibit a very pronounced advantage over the rest – especially so in the case of former international migrants, and above all in the case of former migrants to Europe.

In sum, the relatively poor households of Braima Sori are typically those which have failed to participate in international migration, commerce and enhanced agricultural production. By contrast, Braima Sori’s wealthier households are those that engage in proto-capitalist agricultural production alongside merchant activities, and/or which have succeeded in ensuring a significant level of household wealth based on the income earned from international migration. This brings us to the topic of migration from this village and its effects.



### 8.7 Migration and its effects

There is no doubt that migration plays a very important role in Braima Sori. The figures presented in Table 8.9 are elucidating: 72% of the households (26/36) currently participate in migration; almost as many (70%, or 25/36) currently participate in *international* migration; and 44% include a current member who was once a migrant.

	Yes	No	Yes (%)
Households with current migrants <sup>173</sup> away	26	10	72.2%
Households with current migrants abroad	25	11	69.4%
Households with current migrants in Europe	20	16	55.6%
Households with economically-active (or student-worker) migrants	18	18	50.0%
Households with return migrants	16	20	44.4%
Households with return migrants from abroad	11	25	30.6%
Households with return migrants from Europe	6	30	16.7%

Table 8.9 Braima Sori: Household participation in migration - basic indicators

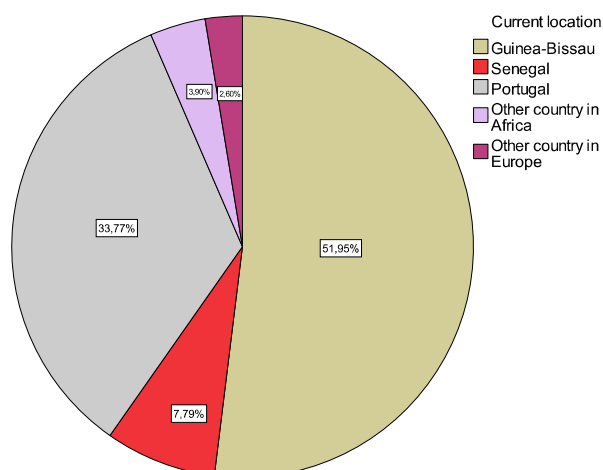
Based on the results of the survey, the current migrant population can be estimated at around 221 (Table 8.1), which amounts to saying that the total resident population of Braima Sori would increase by one seventh if all current migrants were to return at once. This is a lower figure than that put forth by C  (2004), who mentions more than two hundred migrants in Europe alone – a difference that may be partly accounted for by the different estimation methods that were used<sup>174</sup>, but which is mostly due to the fact that there has been a significant amount of return migration in the last few years as a consequence of the impact of the economic crisis upon the public works and construction sectors in Portugal. Whatever the case, however, it is clear that migration remains a very widespread practice.

The geographical breakdown of the current places of residence of the migrants (Figures 8.13 and 8.14) provides additional information on the features of migration from Braima Sori. Just over half of the migrants currently reside somewhere else in Guinea-Bissau: of these, 40% live in Bissau, 30% reside somewhere else in the Gabu region (most

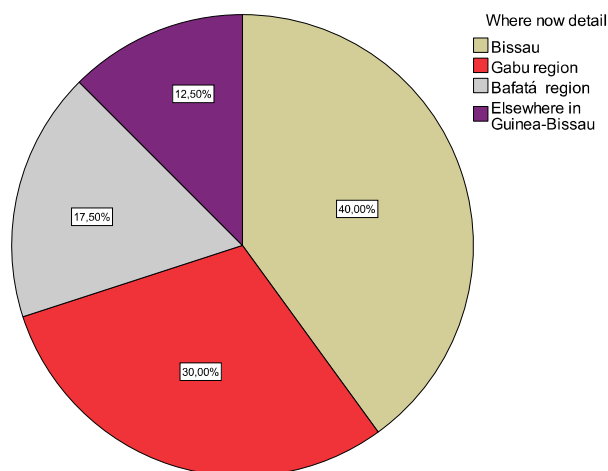
<sup>173</sup> For details on the criteria adopted in the definition of migrants and return migrants, see Chapter 5 above.

<sup>174</sup> C 's (2004) figure was not based on a systematic estimation, nor did it purport to be – this author put forth the overall estimation conveyed to him at the time by the residents of Braima Sori whom he interviewed. The estimation put forth here is based on the extrapolation of the results of the household survey.

often in the city of Gabu itself) and 18% live in the neighbouring region of Bafatá. Among the 48% who are international migrants, Portugal is clearly the predominant destination (accounting for 70% of all international migrants), with Senegal a distant second (17% of international migrants). Other international destinations, both in Africa and in Europe, appear with residual weight.



**Figure 8.13 Braima Sori: Distribution of current migrants by country of current residence**



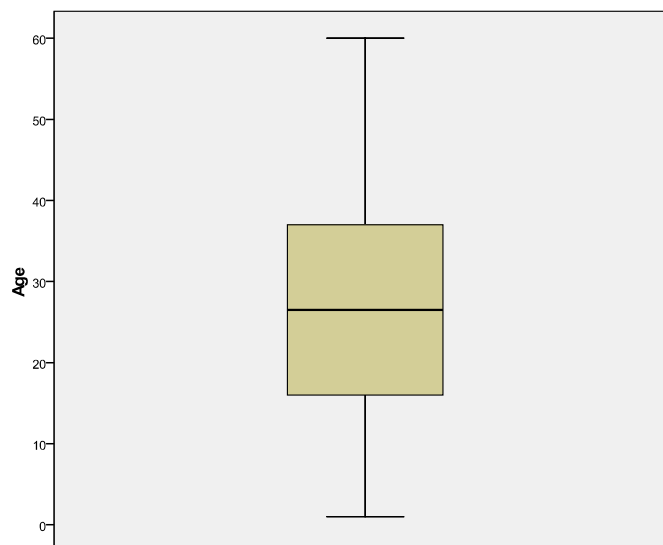
**Figure 8.14 Braima Sori: Distribution of current migrants residing elsewhere in Guinea-Bissau by region**

The survey data also show that migration from Braima Sori is predominantly a male matter: out of 77 reported migrants, only 18 are female (Table 8.10). Males are especially over-represented in international migration: 34 out of 37 international migrants reported by the respondents are male.

		Current place of residence					Total
		Guinea-Bissau	Senegal	Portugal	Other country in Africa	Other country in Europe	
Sex	Male	25	6	23	3	2	59
	Female	15	0	3	0	0	18
Total		40	6	26	3	2	77

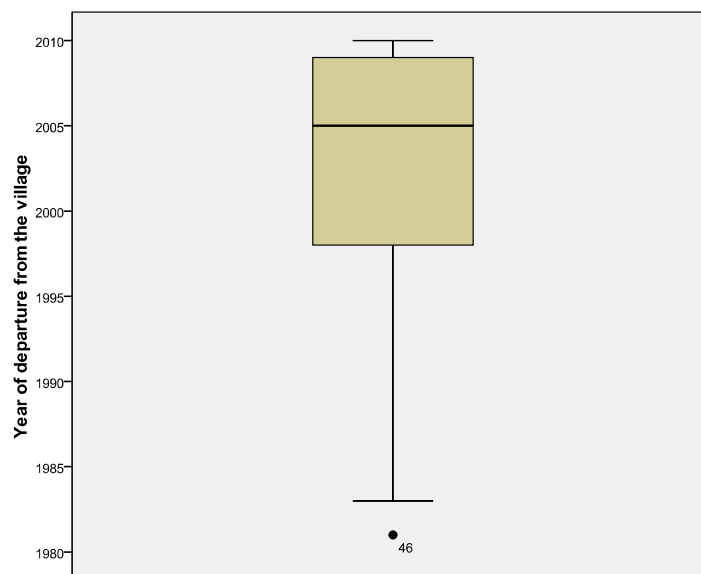
**Table 8.10 Braima Sori: Cross-tabulation of the migrants' gender with their current place of residence, absolute frequencies occurring in the sample**

The gender profile of the migrants is one of the features of Braima Sori migration that clearly sets it apart from Caiomete. Another one is the age characteristics of the migrants (Figure 8.15): although the median age of the migrants from Braima Sori is relatively young (26 years of age), the distribution is less concentrated in the young adult cohorts than is the case in Caiomete. In fact, as many as  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the migrants identified in the survey are between the ages of 37 and 60.



**Figure 8.15 Braima Sori: Current age of the migrants as reported by the respondents, boxplot**

Figure 8.15 is consistent with a succession of consecutive cohorts of migrants, whereby younger migrants continue to migrate (or at least did so until very recently), while many of the older migrants, who migrated longer ago, have not (yet) returned. Figure 8.16, which shows the distribution of the year of the migrants' original departure from the village, corroborates this picture: about half of the migrants left after 2005, but as many as one quarter did so before 1997.



**Figure 8.16 Braima Sori: Current migrants' year of departure from the village, boxplot**

We are now in a position to bring these conclusions together with some of the qualitative data in order to put forth a simple typology of migration profiles from Braima Sori. The overwhelming significance of Portugal as a destination for international migration from Braima Sori can be traced back to the 1980s, when the first local resident, who had served in the colonial army, migrated to Portugal. He was followed by a handful of friends and relatives, eventually giving rise to the emergence of a sustained migration chain between Braima Sori and the former metropolis<sup>175</sup>. Each consecutive wave of migrants actively provided support to the ones that followed by advancing money for the plane fares and visas, providing accommodation and assisting in finding work. The vast majority of these migrants took up jobs in the Portuguese public works and construction sectors, which experienced a boom from the late 1980s onwards largely due to the inflow of EU (then EEC) funds.

The above is reflected in Tables 8.11 and 8.12, which cross-tabulate the migrants' place of residence with their socio-professional status and occupations. Among other things, these tables show that 21 out of the 26 migrants in the sample who are currently residing in Portugal work in the construction sector. Recently, some former migrants to Portugal (possibly as many as one hundred in total, according to some of my interviewees) returned

<sup>175</sup> At about the same time as the first pioneer of migration to Portugal, another resident of Braima Sori initiated a migratory process that would take him to over ten different countries in West and Central Africa, where he took up a number of different jobs. He would subsequently return without having initiated a migration chain, however.

to the village as a consequence of the contraction in the Portuguese labour market. However, many seemingly regard this as a temporary break before heading back to Europe again once the labour market there recovers<sup>176</sup>.

	<b>Student</b>	<b>Economically Active</b>	<b>"Housewife"</b>	<b>Child (Under 6)</b>	<b>Prisoner</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Guinea-Bissau</b>	13	14	6	7	0	<b>40</b>
<b>Senegal</b>	5	1	0	0	0	<b>6</b>
<b>Portugal</b>	2	22	1	0	1	<b>26</b>
<b>Other country in Africa</b>	1	2	0	0	0	<b>3</b>
<b>Other country in Europe</b>	0	2	0	0	0	<b>2</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>77</b>

**Table 8.11 Braima Sori: Cross-tabulation of the migrants' current place of residence with their socio-professional status, absolute frequencies occurring in the sample**

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<sup>176</sup> By and large, international migrants from Braima Sori have entered Portugal through regular channels, under business, tourist or long-term visas, and eventually acquired permanent residents' permits which allow them to travel back and forth at will between the two countries.

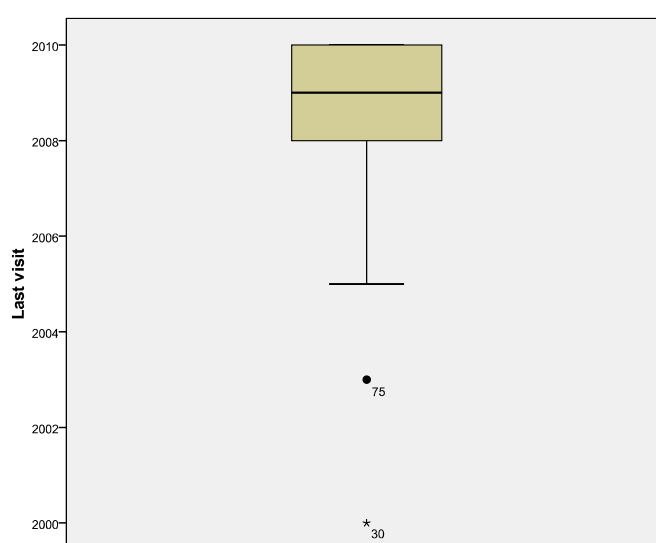
	Unemployed <sup>177</sup>	Construction	Commerce	Primary sector	Other unskilled	DNK/DNA	Total
Guinea-Bissau	0	0	9	5	0	0	14
Senegal	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Portugal	0	21	1	0	0	0	22
Other country in Africa	1	0	0	0	0	1	1
Other country in Europe	1	0	0	0	1	0	2
Total	2	21	11	5	1	1	41

**Table 8.12 Braima Sori: Cross-tabulation of the economically active migrants' current place of residence with their occupations, absolute frequencies occurring in the sample**

Tables 8.11 and 8.12 make it possible to identify three additional main 'categories' of migrants originating in Braima Sori. The first one consists of economically active migrants residing elsewhere in Guinea-Bissau (most often in Bissau or Gabu), who work as merchants or employees in the context of commercial ventures – a pattern that is clearly associated with long-standing Fula trading networks and merchant activities. The second type consists of student migrants: some of these are the offspring of older migrants who migrated along with their parents, but others migrated on their own. For example, all but one (5/6) of the migrants reported to be currently living in Senegal are students (specifically, Koranic students in Senegalese *madrassas*). Still, most student migrants captured in the sample (13/21) live elsewhere in Guinea-Bissau: eight in Bissau, five in Gabu. Finally, the third category consists of migrant households that relocated to a different location in rural Guinea-Bissau, while generally adopting the same livelihood strategies. As a consequence of the respondents' gender-biased answers to the survey, these latter migrants show up either as male primary sector workers living elsewhere in Guinea-Bissau in Table 8.12 or as female "housewives" residing in Guinea-Bissau in Table 8.11.

<sup>177</sup> Insofar as the information with respect to these migrants is conveyed indirectly by other people in their households of origin, it is likely that the prevalence of unemployment has been considerably underestimated. Typically, the respondents would indicate what each migrant's usual occupation was, regardless of whether s/he was in employment at the moment. These specific figures should therefore be taken with caution.

Above all else, however, we are interested in what impact migration has had in terms of development, and that is what the remaining part of this section elaborates on. The first thing to be noted is that the vast majority of these migrants maintain very significant linkages with the village, as suggested by how much time has passed since their last visit: whereas half of the migrants originally initiated their migratory process prior to 2005, a full  $\frac{3}{4}$  of them last visited the village either in 2008 or after that (Figure 8.17). Even the migrants who reside in Portugal, who ‘on average’ have been away since 1998, also ‘on average’ last visited the village in 2008.



**Figure 8.17 Braima Sori: Year of current migrants' last visit to the village as of May 2010, boxplot**

Given the high degree of relational proximity between the migrants and their households of origin in Braima Sori, along with the fact that international migration is very widespread and most often undertaken by males who left their dependent households behind, it is not surprising that remittances are a very common practice. 22 out of the 26 households that currently participate in migration report having received money remittances in the previous twelve months. Moreover, almost 50% of *all* the migrants over the age of 15 are reported to have sent at least some money during the course of the previous year (Table 8.13).

	Sent money in the previous 12 months	Did not send money in the previous 12 months	Not applicable (under 15)	Total
Guinea-Bissau	6	21	13	40
Senegal	1	2	3	6
Portugal	20	6	0	26
Other country in Africa	1	2	0	3
Other country in Europe	2	0	0	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>77</b>

**Table 8.13 Braima Sori: Cross-tabulation of the migrants' current place of residence with their remittance behaviour in the previous 12 months, absolute frequencies occurring in the sample**

This being said, remittance behaviour is, as might be expected, dependent upon the socioprofessional status and occupation of the migrants, which in turn correlates with their place of residence. Thus, we find that the internal migrants who live elsewhere in Guinea-Bissau (many of whom are either students or 'rural' family migrants) are much less likely to remit, whereas migrants residing in Portugal (most of whom are employed in the construction sector, earn relatively high wages and have dependent relatives back in Braima Sori) remit in very high numbers. In fact, the same applies to remittances 'in kind', which in the overwhelming majority of cases consist of clothing, shoes and cell phones: 23 out of the 26 adult migrants who reside in Portugal are reported to have sent material help other than money in the previous twelve months, compared to only 9 out of the 26 adult migrants who live somewhere else in Guinea-Bissau.

In spite of these geographical patterns, however, it remains true that remittances are a very widespread practice, not least because they benefit the vast majority of the 70% of households in Braima Sori that currently participate in international migration. As we have seen (Table 8.8), remittances are also positively associated with long-run household wealth, as proxied by the asset index score: remittance-recipient households have a mean asset index score of 0.98, compared to 0.70 for non-recipient households. Given that 85% of migrant households reported receiving remittances in the previous 12 months (that is to say, the two sub-sets of households – migrant households and remittance-recipient households – largely coincide), it is not surprising that the mean asset index score among migrant households (0.92) is just slightly inferior to that among remittance-recipients.

Even more impressive is the effect of past migration upon long-run household wealth. In any context, this effect can be presumed *a priori* to be greater than that of



current migration, given that the constraining effect of migration upon the household's pool of labour has been alleviated following the return of the migrants and that the full cycle of migration, with its associated remittances and return with accumulated savings, has been seen through to completion. In Braima Sori, this effect is very clear: households that include former migrants as current members have a mean asset index score of 1.18, compared to 0.62 among those households that include no such members. And if we look only at households containing former international migrants, or former migrants to Europe, the figures are even more impressive: 1.42 and 1.52, respectively. Thus, there is absolutely no doubt that participation in migration exerts a very important positive effect upon household long-run wealth, and largely accounts for the significant amount of wealth differentiation that we have seen to exist.

In view of the above, it is not surprising that a full 100% of the respondents stated that migration has had a "positive" impact upon the village as a whole, and 86% (31/36) argued that the impact upon their own households has been positive as well. This is especially true in the case of the households that, at one time or another, participated in intercontinental migration. Indeed, the streams of income that these migrants accessed upon arriving in Portugal was something completely unlike anything they had ever had access to, and made it possible to access a range of consumer goods that was previously inaccessible. As one of the respondents put it, "before migration, many of us only ate one meal a day, and we did not have any door locks or zinc roofs in our houses; nowadays, most people live in good houses, many own gold ornaments and TVs and some have even stopped working in the fields".

One of the aspects in which the impact of migration has been most remarkable is the extent to which the associated income has made it possible to finance the *hajj* (pilgrimage to Mecca) by many village elders. According to the participants in the focus group, while only a handful of people from the village had made that pilgrimage before the onset of mass migration, perhaps as many as one hundred have become *hajjis* over the last two decades. One of the respondents – a former migrant – even mentioned that, at a certain stage, "a veritable competition ensued between the migrants from Braima Sori in Portugal as to who would first pay for our fathers' trips to Mecca". Significantly, the same former migrant mentioned that "we did not really know what to do with the money, so many of us spent it on nightlife and paying for our elders' trips to Mecca. We thought that it would last forever, so we did not really bother to invest in agriculture back in the village."

Indeed, there is ample qualitative evidence that a high share of the income derived from migration has been used to finance current consumption, sometimes of a conspicuous kind. In some cases, the income from migration even had a displacement effect upon production: as we have already mentioned, two of the 26 migrant households included in the sample explicitly reported living exclusively off the money remittances sent to them by their migrant relatives and having withdrawn from production of any kind. Moreover, some of the return migrants who were interviewed, who had recently returned to the village following a period of unemployment in Europe, explicitly regretted not having used the money that they had earned while away in ways that would now enhance their agricultural output and income.

Every single one of the 22 respondents who reported having received money remittances in the previous twelve months stated that some of the money had been used to pay for food expenses, but only three reported using the money to hire workers (and none mentioned any other form of capital investment) in the previous year. When we compare the recourse to the hiring-in of labour by remittance-recipient and non-recipient households (Table 8.14), we find that remittances are indeed associated with a slightly greater incidence of hiring-in in the previous year (67% compared to 53%). However, this does not seem to consist of hiring in the context of expanded accumulation: as is visible in Table 8.15, the average output of groundnuts on the part of remittance-recipient households, despite the additional recourse to hired labour, is *less* than that among non-recipient households (and just slightly larger in the case of cashew nuts). The implication seems clear: those migrant households that have not withdrawn from agricultural production altogether typically draw on a smaller pool of labour within the household itself and, for that reason, exhibit a slightly greater likelihood of hiring paid workers as ‘replacements’; however, this barely compensates the effect of the reduction in the labour pool upon the output of cashew nuts, and not at all in the case of groundnuts.

		Hiring-in of agricultural labour			Total
		No	Yes	Not applicable (no agricultural production)	
Remittance-recipient household	No	7	6	1	14
	Yes	8	12	2	22
Total		15	18	3	36

**Table 8.14 Braima Sori: Cross-tabulation of the households' remittance-recipient status with their recourse to paid agricultural labour in the previous twelve months, absolute frequencies occurring in the sample**

Remittance-recipient HH Y/N		Groundnuts (Kgs)	Cashew nuts (Kgs)	Rice (Kgs)	Maize (Kgs)	Millet (Kgs)	Cassava (Kgs)
No	Mean	325,7	120,1	38,2	146,7	126,2	41,7
	N	13	9	5	3	9	3
Yes	Mean	225,9	169,0	102,5	87,5	72,1	38,7
	N	20	16	3	4	12	6
Total	Mean	265,3	151,4	62,3	112,9	95,3	39,7
	N	33	25	8	7	21	9

**Table 8.15 Braima Sori: Comparison of the mean output per adult of various cash and food crops as of the last agricultural cycle among remittance-recipient and non-recipient households**

On the other hand, we find that past participation in migration, especially of the intercontinental kind, is associated with an upgrading of farm production. The average size of the herds owned by the households that comprise return migrants from Europe is more than twice as large as the average in the village as a whole, and the mean cashew nut and groundnut outputs as of the last agricultural cycle are almost twice as large, too (Table 8.16). This reflects the fact that, despite the fact that some return migrants regret not having invested more in agriculture while they were away, we still find that the level of ownership of agricultural tools among households with return migrants is higher than average (Table 8.17). It also reflects a somewhat greater incidence of the hiring-in of agricultural labour amongst those households that comprise former migrants, especially intercontinental ones (Table 8.18). The differences in this latter crucial respect are somewhat limited, but the cases of the few wealthier proto-bourgeois households for whom upwards social mobility drew both on their merchant activities in Guinea-Bissau and

on past intercontinental migration provide, once again, the most visible signs of differentiation in this respect. Hence, the overall conclusion is that, in this context, migration does indeed show evidence of contributing to an enhancement of agrarian production – based on the intensification of production methods but also, albeit more modestly, on greater recourse to hired labour. Seemingly, the precondition for this is the completion of a successful migratory cycle to a relatively affluent context, followed by a return to farm activity in the context of origin.

Households containing return migrants from Europe Y/N		Mean herd size	Mean output of groundnuts per adult households member (Kgs)	Mean output of cashew nuts per adult households member (Kgs)
No	Mean	15,8	230,4	117,7
	N	30	27	20
Yes	Mean	40,8	421,8	286,3
	N	6	6	5
<i>p</i> -value of significance of differences (T-test, 2-tailed)		0,17	0,210	0,247
Total	Mean	20,0	265,3	151,4
	N	36	33	25

Table 8.16 Braima Sori: Comparison of the mean herd size and output of groundnuts and cashew nuts as of the last agricultural cycle among households with and without return migrants from Europe

	Sample total (n=36)	Households w/ return migrants (n=16)	Households w/ return migrants from Europe (n=6)
Plough	63%	64%	67%
Seeder	11%	21%	33%
Weeder	26%	29%	33%
Cart	11%	21%	17%

Table 8.17 Braima Sori: Ownership of various animal-powered agricultural tools as a function of past participation in migration

Hiring-in of agricultural labour				
	No	Yes	Not applicable (no agricultural production)	Yes (% amongst applicable)
Households without former migrants	9	10	1	53%
Households with former migrants	6	8	2	57%
Households with former migrants to Europe	2	4	0	67%
Sample total	15	18	3	55%

Table 8.18 Braima Sori: Recourse to the hiring-in of agricultural labour as a function of past participation in migration

### 8.8 Conclusions

Braima Sori is a very affluent village for Bissau-Guinean standards. Several factors concur to account for this, and have in a sense come together virtuously to enhance the standard of living of the population of the village: first, the fact that agriculture in Braima Sori is seemingly both more diversified and more productive, due to the relative lack of demographic pressure upon the land, the use of animal traction and tools, and the relatively greater reliance on wage labour. Second, the diversification of local livelihood strategies *away* from agriculture, with commerce and cattle-raising constituting important complementary means of livelihood for many of the village residents. Third and most importantly, the positive impact of migration in terms of raising the standard of living over the last two or three decades.

This is essentially a community of independent commodity producers – even more so than Caiomete. The quantitative and qualitative data that were collected indicate that the vast majority of the households produce for their own consumption, but also suggest that this plays a subordinate and complementary role *vis-à-vis* production destined for the market. Only a minority of the households report having earned any wages in the previous twelve months – and never do the latter constitute the main source of household monetary income. Moreover, among the few households that hired out labour, most also reported hiring in. Thus, reliance on the hiring-out of wage labour in this context is indicative of some

limited specialisation, rather than proletarianisation. It is not surprising that it should be thus, given the abundance of land (no household is landless and there is no vernacular market for land) and the generally high level of affluence of Braima Sori households.

The picture conveyed by the data is far from a static one in terms of class differentiation – however, the dynamics under way do not concern the *internal* differentiation of the village into distinct emerging classes, but rather its upward differentiation *as a whole* with respect to the surrounding region, as apparent in the incidence of the hiring-in of labourers from outside the village. To a fairly significant extent, this hiring-in takes place in the context of what can be correctly described as capitalist social-productive arrangements, in the sense of involving the hiring of wage labour in the context of the production of commodities destined for the market. In the vast majority of cases, the recourse to hired labour does not invalidate the fact that most labour going into production is allocated through intra-households ties – that is to say, without being mediated by the labour market. A handful of local residents, however, show signs of being on their way to becoming a full-fledged agrarian bourgeoisie: not only are their levels of output and recourse to hired labour larger than average, they also report such practices as the leasing of land away from Braima Sori for the purpose of larger-scale agricultural activity reliant on hired labour.

Against this background, migration, despite being an extremely widespread practice, does not seem to have significantly altered the social-productive dynamics in the village. Money remittances and accumulated savings have certainly had a very substantial positive impact upon the standard of living of the population. On the other hand, migration has unquestionably reduced the local labour supply both directly (through the absence of the migrants themselves, though to a less significant extent than in Caiomete) and indirectly (by curbing any possible process of proletarianisation). However, given that other factors besides migration account for Braima Sori's relative affluence, it is questionable to what extent the village would constitute a major source of rural labour anyway.

As regards the impact of migration in terms of fostering the local emergence of an agrarian bourgeoisie, we have mixed evidence: on the one hand, migration seems to have engendered a certain degree of *withdrawal* from local production on the part of some households, in addition to being overwhelmingly associated with an increase in (basic or conspicuous) consumption, rather than investment; on the other hand, households with *return* migrants show evidence of engaging in farm activities on a larger scale, with larger

average herds, greater average outputs, a higher level of reliance on animal traction and slightly greater reliance on hired labour. The 'progressive' effect of migration (upon completion of the cycle) upon the modernisation of production and the dissemination of capitalist social-productive relations is therefore undeniable. Nevertheless, considering that Braima Sori seems as favourable a context as there can be anywhere in Guinea-Bissau for that to occur, we need to moderate our expectations that migration can serve as a quick route to endogenous class differentiation on the scale of this social formation as a whole.

## 9. Conclusions of the case-study

The previous three chapters provided extensive empirical information on migration and development in Guinea-Bissau, first at the level of this social formation as a whole and then at the micro level of the two case-study villages. This chapter brings it all together by undertaking a comparative discussion of the conclusions from the two village case-studies and then cross-tabulating that discussion with the macro-level data and analysis in order to come to some overall conclusions.

### ***9.1 A tale of two villages***

As regards the key issues of interest to us – migration and development –, Caiomete and Braima Sori are at once similar and different. They are similar mainly in the predominance of relatively independent smallholder production, in the significance of their reliance upon migration as a livelihood strategy and in the considerable inroads made by the tendency towards commodification. The two villages are different principally with respect to their degree of crop and livelihood diversification, the degree of intensification of production, the qualitative features of out-migration, the average levels of agricultural output and wealth, and the signs of emergence of a proto-bourgeoisie. If we turn to the welfare and development effects of migration, we find mostly differences between the two villages. The households of Braima Sori appear to have derived much greater welfare benefits from migration than those of Caiomete, although the latter village has seen greater collective involvement by the migrants. And whereas the effect of migration upon structural change in Caiomete, if any, appears to be a mostly constraining one, in the case of Braima Sori we find unquestionable, albeit limited, evidence of migration furthering structural change.

All of the above can be accounted for, with the contrast between the two villages illuminating some more general features of the migration-development nexus. This is what the next sections aim to do. Before we come to that, Table 9.1 recalls some general features of the two villages.



<b>Caiomete</b>	<b>Braima Sori</b>
Estimated resident population: 1,820	Estimated resident population: 1,326
Average household size: 5.0	Average household size: 12.3
Animist cultural-religious context, ethnic homogeneity	Muslim cultural-religious context, ethnic homogeneity
Relatively remote and isolated	Easily accessible and close to the country's second main city
Sample size = 72 households	Sample size = 36 households

**Table 9.1 Caiomete and Braima Sori: a recollection of some general features**

#### *9.1.1 Livelihoods and production*

Both Caiomete and Braima Sori have their local economic base firmly in smallholder agriculture. Among the 108 households in the two villages that were included in the survey sample, only three – all in Braima Sori – reported not engaging in agriculture. We may confidently call it *smallholder* agriculture because it is undertaken on a relatively small scale, mostly using means of production (particularly land and labour) owned or provided by the households themselves. Thus, we have seen that all the households that practice agriculture in Braima Sori, and 86% of those in Caiomete, own at least a small parcel of land out of which to make a living, although in some cases that may not be enough to ensure even the physical reproduction of the household (thus amounting to so-called *marginal* farming: Hazell *et al* 2007). Additionally, we have examined the quantitative distributions of the households' crop outputs, which indicate the relatively small scale of production: among *all* the households in the overall sample of 108, the largest reported output of cashew nuts was 2,000kgs, which at the relatively high 2010 season closing price of 350 francs CFA/kg amounts to a total of slightly less than £1,000. This will approximately have been the total income receipt from that year's cashew nut harvest accruing to the household in the sample that produced the largest output (in this particular case, a household comprising seven adult members and ten children).

If that is the case, it becomes obvious that we have to look elsewhere if we are to account for the huge long-run wealth disparities between the two villages, as apparent to anyone who spends time in them and as represented by their mean asset index scores<sup>178</sup>.

<sup>178</sup> We should concede that the fact that Braima Sori households comprise on average 2.5 times as many people as those in Caiomete, due to differences in terms of the social logic of kinship ties and household structure, introduces an inherent tendency for the former to appear as wealthier, given that the same durable goods appear in the results of the sample as being shared by more people. However, as we have seen in chapters 7 and 8 (above), the differential is many times larger than

The answer lies in three key differences between the two villages. First, the degree of diversification of income-generating farm activities: whereas Caiomete's only significant cash crop consists of cashew nuts, the households of Braima Sori also rely on the growing, harvesting and sale of groundnuts, and many additionally combine these two agricultural activities with cattle-herding and the occasional sale of cattle as a complementary source of income. Second, the degree of local off-farm livelihood diversification: 28% of Braima Sori households engage in commerce or trade, compared to only 7% in Caiomete (the latter clearly being the wealthiest in their village); in addition, the labour supply in the former village often takes place in the context of off-farm activities like carpentry and masonry, whereas the supply of labour in Caiomete mostly corresponds to the undertaking of specific low-paid agricultural tasks for others in the village, either individually or in the context of age-based work-groups, at specific moments in the agricultural cycle. Finally, the third and most decisive factor consists of international migration, which can be veritably said to have changed the landscape of Braima Sori, but less so that of Caiomete: the geographical patterns of migration from Braima Sori, the characteristics of the labour-market incorporation of the migrants from this village in their host contexts, and the significance and intensity of the economic linkages between those migrants and their households of origin have caused unprecedented streams of income to flow into this village over the past two decades, with obvious consequences in terms of standard of living.

In addition, we find profound differences between the two villages above and beyond the degree of diversification of cash crops that concur to account for differential wealth, food security and overall resilience levels. The first of these differences consists of the use of agricultural tools that rely on animal traction – an important productivity-enhancing aspect of productive modernisation that is quite widespread in Braima Sori but totally absent in Caiomete. Another difference consists of the diversification of *food* crops, with three different crops (millet, maize and cassava) being grown by upwards of 40% of Braima Sori households, whereas the households from Caiomete are almost exclusively reliant on paddy rice as a food crop (albeit complemented by small garden vegetable production and the gathering of forest products). A third crucial difference consists of the availability of land: while no vernacular market for land has emerged in the context of either village, it seems clear that only in the context of Braima Sori can this be accounted for by under-population and land abundance; in Caiomete, by contrast, land scarcity is

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could possibly be accounted for this, with numerous Braima Sori households owning such goods as cars, motorcycles or televisions.

clearly a pressing issue, with the absence of a vernacular market for land in fact appearing as an abnormality.

Three telling indicators that reflect the degree of land scarcity in Caiomete are the share of landless households (14%, compared to 0% in Braima Sori), the share of those that report paying some form of rent in exchange for the right to till and/or harvest a crop field (33%, compared to 11%), and the share of those that report having lost parcels in the past due to conflicts over ownership (24%, compared to 0%). This makes for a clear contrast between two contexts characterised by markedly different levels of land abundance. Against this background, I have put forth the hypothesis that perhaps the failure of a vernacular land market to have yet emerged in Caiomete is due to the relatively recent attainment of the 'natural frontier', in which case community institutions governing what is socially regarded as a commodity and what is not might not yet have had time to evolve. Corroborating or invalidating this hypothesis would require additional evidence; however, the aforementioned indications of land scarcity in Caiomete can certainly be linked with the productive shift onto cashew and the expansion of the area taken up by cashew groves in the past two to three decades. This hypothesis would therefore provide a plausible explanation for the absence of a land market, while also implying that tenurial institutions will be subject to significant pressure to evolve in the future.

Another use-value that is far from having been fully commodified in the context of either village, but with regard to which we find important differences between our two case-study contexts, is labour. At first glance, the provision of both labour and labour-power in the context of the two villages seems widespread to the point of constituting a dominant arrangement, with a majority of the respondent households having demanded or supplied labour (or both) from/to others at some time during the previous year. This shows that we are far from the mythical scenario of a fully homogeneous peasantry solely undertaking independent production and, at most, occasionally exchanging labour through ties of reciprocity. Nevertheless, a closer look at the concrete local labour-market arrangements in these two villages shows that commodified labour still accounts for a relatively minor share of the total social labour going into the production process: only 19% of Caiomete households, and none in Braima Sori, report relying primarily on wages as a source of monetary income; and, conversely, the examination of the character and significance of the tasks that workers were hired-in to perform, in addition to the relatively limited heterogeneity of crop output levels, shows that capitalist agrarian relations are yet to take off in earnest, especially in Caiomete. Still, we find important differences between

the two villages also in this respect: whereas, in the case of Caiomete, little hiring-in of labour can be deemed to have a (proto-)capitalist character (in the sense of labour-power being traded as a commodity in the context of the production of other commodities), much more significant signs of the latter can be discerned in Braima Sori, corresponding to the hiring of agricultural labourers by wealthier households in the context of cash-crop production.

This enables us to draw some conclusions with respect to the dynamics of class differentiation in our two village case-studies. In the case of Caiomete, there seems to be little by way of such a differentiation, whether of a local or supra-local type. The buying or selling of labour-power or labour services between Caiomete and the surrounding region seems to be quite limited and, when it does occur, it often reflects a degree of ethnic specialisation (Felupe labourers hired to undertake dyke repairs, for example). Within this village, while there is abundant evidence of exploitation, it takes place much less in the context of commodified labour-market relations than within that of patriarchal social ties, of which the widespread and exploitative arrangements akin to the feudal *corvée* linking many of the most destitute female-headed households with (usually) some of their male kin provide ample evidence. Thus, in Caiomete we find evidence of wealth and power differentials, but little evidence linking these with proto-capitalist social-productive arrangements. Statistically, both crop output levels and labour demand are very weakly, or not at all, associated with long-run wealth. Rather, the obvious pathway to relative wealth in this village consists of commerce, while the most potent cause of relative destitution is the inability by women to inherit the land and their subjection to patriarchal arrangements. This is, in sum, a markedly pre-capitalist context where there is inequality, exploitation and wealth differentiation, but little by way of *class* differentiation.

By contrast, there *is* evidence of such a differentiation occurring in Braima Sori. This, however, does not really consist of differentiation within the village itself, for almost all the households there consist of relatively well-off producers whose limited instances of labour supply largely consist of the provision of non-agricultural labour to each other and, especially, outside the village. Rather, differentiation in the context of Braima Sori mainly refers to the fact that many households in this village, by virtue of their much greater than average purchasing power, are able to rely more extensively on the hiring-in of non-residents, particularly itinerant agricultural labourers. In contrast to Caiomete, in Braima Sori there is a large positive statistical association between long-run wealth and the demand for labour, suggestive of emerging dynamics of class (as opposed to just wealth)

differentiation. It remains true that only in a handful of cases can we properly speak of households that exhibit bourgeois-like features, being able to mobilise capital to undertake such things as renting more productive and better-irrigated land elsewhere for others to work on, and hiring a relatively numerous contingent of workers to undertake a greater share of the total labour going into their productive activities. Still, even these labour-demanding households carry on undertaking agricultural work themselves despite also hiring others, and their crop output levels have not substantially taken off vis-à-vis more fully independent producers. The evidence is therefore mixed, with class differentiation still limited at present but showing obvious signs of being in the process of taking off.

Looking at these two village contexts in conjunction, we are drawn to the conclusion that the main obstacle to class differentiation and the generalisation of capitalist social-productive relations does *not* consist of insufficient labour supplies. Labour-demanding households in Braima Sori seem able to draw on an abundant supply of labour from outside the village; as for Caiomete, the qualitative evidence suggests that many people, especially among the poorest, would be keen to work for others to a much more significant extent were this to take place in the context of more productive labour processes which, even if characterised by higher rates of exploitation, might allow for greater returns to themselves as labourers than those which accrue to them in the context of the patriarchal exploitative arrangements to which they are currently subject. At least for now, however, the latter appears to be precluded by certain socioeconomic features of Caiomete: the lack of freely available land, a market for land or easy opportunities for the consolidation of land-holding; local social norms and institutions inimical to 'excessive' inequality and accumulation of wealth; and the fact that the local pattern of productive specialisation involves a degree of 'lock-in' in a crop (cashew) that does not lend itself to mechanisation or the use of animal traction. All of this makes it well nigh impossible even for the wealthiest Caiomete households, which consist of small traders, to locally engage in expanded capitalist production and accumulation. In fact, two of those constraints – the tenurial regime and the cashew specialisation – make it hard even for agrarian productive capital to penetrate from the outside, unless some profound and tremendously upsetting changes occur in the future.

Now, Braima Sori's emerging proto-capitalists are not faced with either of the aforementioned constraints, and it is largely for that reason that we find a much more dynamic picture there as regards the dissemination of capitalist social-productive arrangements. Of course, if that is the case, one may well ask why it is that we have not yet

witnessed a more thorough transition, and why it is that simple commodity production remains the dominant logic even in this village. Arguably, the answer to these questions has to do with other, wider constraints, which we discuss in section 9.2 (“The bigger picture”) below. At any rate, the comparative discussion of these two case-studies nicely illustrates the fact that the tendency for the dissemination and predominance of capitalist social-productive relations, while very much real, is also faced with constraints and counter-tendencies that, to a large extent, are locally contingent.

Another thing that these two case-studies show is that is perfectly possible for commodification to take root in some key domains (market mediation between production and consumption) while being structurally delayed in others (the allocation of labour and land). In both of these village contexts, the commodification of the means of subsistence is very widespread, whether through monetised sale or barter, and insofar as it has been furthered by relatively recent processes (migration and remittances, on the one hand, and the rise to prominence of cashew as a cash crop, on the other), we can hardly claim these case-studies to corroborate any repeasantisation argument. Quite the contrary: local producers in these two villages may be wary of relying solely on markets to meet their basic needs and may take some decisions accordingly, but the degree of market reliance has certainly increased over the past two or three decades.

With respect to deagrarianisation, on the contrary, the two case-studies provide much more corroborating evidence. In static terms, both of these villages, especially Braima Sori, show a significant prevalence (though certainly not dominance) of reliance on local off-farm livelihoods and activities, including commerce and the provision of petty off-farm services. It is difficult to trace back the dynamics of this without further evidence, but it may well be argued that the ability to undertake at least some of these activities (from small commerce to the charging of cell phones to local DVD projections in makeshift theatres) can only have increased in recent years. Whatever the case, however, clearly the most significant instance and avenue of deagrarianisation has consisted of migration<sup>179</sup>. We now turn to that topic, after a summary table laying out side by side some of the main features of the two villages as far as livelihoods and the social organisation of production are concerned (Table 9.2).

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<sup>179</sup> Although we should concede that substantial migration from these two contexts does not by itself constitute convincing evidence supporting any general arguments on deagrarianisation in Guinea-Bissau, given that the two case-study sites were selected, among other things, based on precisely that variable.

<b>Caio mete</b>	<b>Braima Sori</b>
All the households in the sample engage in agriculture	2 households in the sample of 36 live exclusively off remittances, 1 exclusively off merchant activities; the remainder practice agriculture
Main food crops: paddy rice (91%)	Main food crops: millet (70% of the households that practice agriculture), maize (48%), cassava (45%), paddy rice (27%)
Main cash crops: cashew nuts (97%)	Main cash crops: groundnuts (100% of the households that practice agriculture), cashew nuts (82%)
Significant commodification of agricultural produce: barter, like monetised sale, very widespread	Significant commodification of agricultural produce: monetised sale much more widespread than barter
Output per household member: Relatively compact distributions around a low mean, 1 or 2 outliers in each case (never the same)	Greater heterogeneity in terms of output per household member, 1-3 outliers (never the same) for each crop
Animal traction not used in agricultural activity	2/3 of the households rely on animal traction in agricultural activity
29% own cattle; average herd size: 2.5 (max.: 8)	56% own cattle; average herd size: 36.0 (max.: 100)
7% engage in commerce	28% engage in commerce
19% of all the households rely principally on wages as a source of monetary income, 1 household relies exclusively on wages as a source of monetary income	0% of the households rely primarily on wages as a source of monetary income
In 75% of the households, at least one person hired out labour in previous 12 months (mostly agricultural work in the context of work-groups)	In 25% of the households, at least one person hired out labour in the previous 12 months (mostly simple provision of non-agricultural services)
28% of the households hired in non-residents to perform agricultural tasks; 63% hired in residents	50% hired in non-residents in agriculture; 19% hired in residents
Hiring-in is hardly ever proto-capitalist	Significant proto-capitalist hiring-in
Little evidence of external or internal class differentiation (in a capitalist sense)	Strong evidence of external class differentiation
No market for land	No market for land
14% of the households are landless	No landless households; 78% work only their own land
24% of the households reportedly lost land due to conflicts over ownership	No-one in the sample reportedly lost land due to conflicts over ownership in the past
33% of the households pay rent (in the form of labour time, within the village and often to husbands and other relatives)	4 households (11%) pay rent (2 in cash, away from the village; 2 in the form of a share of the harvest)

**Table 9.2 Caio mete and Braima Sori: a comparative summary of key features in the domains of livelihoods and production**

Tributary arrangements still very prevalent, but <i>blima</i> has been gradually waning	No evidence of tributary arrangements
Output per adult of both rice and cashew nuts exhibit (very moderate) negative associations with long-run wealth	Outputs per adult of rice (positively) and maize (negatively) exhibit relatively significant associations with long-run wealth
Demand for agricultural labour positively but very weakly associated with long-run wealth	Strong positive association between the demand for agricultural labour and long-run wealth
Female-headed households much poorer on average	Gender of household head not statistically associated with long-run wealth
Participation in commerce is the main positive determinant of long-run wealth	Participation in commerce positively but moderately associated with long-run wealth

**Table 9.2 (continued): Caiomete and Braima Sori: a comparative summary of key features in the domains of livelihoods and production**

### *9.1.2 Migration and its effects*

One of the most important conclusions yielded by the comparative analysis of our two case-study sites is that migration from what may appear as quite similar contexts of origin (two rural communities in the same small country) can take on very different qualitative characteristics, which in turn decisively influence the feed-back effects of migration upon those villages. Migration may be extremely prevalent as a livelihood strategy in both contexts (with 78% of the households in Caiomete and 72% of the ones in Braima Sori currently participating in it), but the gender profile of the migrants, the geographical patterns of the migration flows and the modes of socioprofessional incorporation in their respective host contexts differ substantially between the two villages.

This shows very clearly that individual decisions to migrate do not arise in a social and historical vacuum; rather, they take place in the context of chains, networks and systems that are characterised by considerable inertia, have their roots in history (whether by structural ‘necessity’ or by accident), and operate by changing the field of information, opportunities and resources available to potential subsequent migrants. Intra-national migration flows from the two villages have followed relatively similar logics, mostly consisting of rural-urban migration to Bissau or the respective regional capital, to study, seek employment or engage in trade, as a consequence of the urban concentration of public services and economic opportunities. In both cases, this has doubtless accelerated in the post-independence period, as a consequence of the deepening of rural-urban imbalances that has characterised Guinea-Bissau’s post-independence development



pattern. With regard to international migration, however, we find much more pronounced differences.

Current international migration from Caiomete reflects the superposition of two main migration dynamics. The first one is specifically associated with the Manjaco ethnic group and the northern region of Guinea-Bissau, dates back to long ago and was originally associated with the demand for labour in the context of groundnut plantations in Southern Senegal. These agricultural labour migration flows subsequently expanded both in terms of occupations (to include sailors, domestic workers, etc.) and geographically (extending to France, Senegal's colonial metropolis at the time), thus giving rise to an intercontinental Guinea-Bissau–Senegal–France migration system that has reached its maturity long ago. The second of these international migration dynamics is more recent and more widely shared with other contexts in Guinea-Bissau, consisting of post-colonial migration to Portugal, typically via Bissau rather than Senegal and France.

In the case of Braima Sori, the local history of international migration appears to have been brought on by relatively more 'accidental' factors, to the extent that there is no international migration system linking the region as a whole with Europe on a scale comparable with that of the Manjaco. However, it was nevertheless shaped by structural factors as well. The successful migration to Portugal by a few pioneers in the 1980s, in a context of economic expansion and large public works programmes in the latter country, enabled those pioneers to thrive, and then to encourage and support the subsequent migration of relatives and acquaintances. This process acquired significant momentum throughout the following decades, and it was only in the late 2000s that the onset of economic stagnation in Portugal brought on a decrease in international out-migration and an increase in return migration flows. As one of the respondents to the survey vividly put it, "the effects of the economic crisis are felt more severely over here than in Europe".

There are therefore both differences and similarities between the migration dynamics in the two villages: both have been affected by wider structural processes taking place elsewhere, but these structural processes have been different in each case – and so have the local responses and consequences. The window of opportunity created by migration in each of these two local contexts has also taken on a different character: whereas in the case of Braima Sori international migration appeared as a promising avenue for livelihood diversification, upwards social mobility and the accumulation of wealth, in the case of Caiomete (or at least for most of its migrants) it has often constituted a way out of a

constraining context characterised by the scarcity of land and livelihoods, and by social structures regarded as oppressive<sup>180</sup>.

The aforementioned processes and dynamics thus concur to account for the current quantitative and qualitative features of the migration flows and stocks originating in the two villages. In the case of Caiomete, as a broad generalisation, what we find is relatively feminised migration to relatively less affluent contexts, followed by less successful socio-professional trajectories and undertaken by individuals that maintain relatively weaker ties to their households of origin. In the case of Braima Sori, by contrast, we find more successful migration trajectories in more affluent contexts, by mostly male individuals with much more effectual linkages to their households of origin. All of these factors have crystallised, among other things, in the relative prevalence and volume of remittances to the two villages, and in the welfare effects of the latter. Thus it is that despite the greater prevalence of collective 'development' initiatives by the migrants from Caiomete in the context of their HTAs in Portugal and France, Braima Sori has seen its standard of living improve as a consequence of migration to a much more significant extent than Caiomete.

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<sup>180</sup> For example, relatively frequent reference was made in the context of the survey and qualitative interviews to migration by young women to Senegal in order to avoid or escape arranged marriages.

<b>Migration</b>	
<b>Caïomete</b>	<b>Braïma Sori</b>
History of international migration likely to date back to the early 20th Century	History of international migration dates back to the 1980s
78% of the households currently participate in migration	72% of the households currently participate in migration
Main destinations: Bissau (38%), Senegal (22%), Portugal (18%), elsewhere in the region (13%), France (8%)	Main destinations: Portugal (34%), Bissau (21%), elsewhere in the region (16%), neighbouring region (Bafatá) (9%), Senegal (8%)
Balanced sex-ratio among migrants	Overwhelmingly male migrants
72% of the households include former migrants	44% of the households include former migrants
Prevalence of remittances: 24% of all the households, 30% of those with current migrants	Prevalence of remittances: 61% of all the households, 85% of those with current migrants
Substantial evidence of collective initiatives by migrants in the village (road maintenance, new school, new healthcare centre)	Little evidence of collective initiatives by migrants in the village (collective financing of repair works in local mosque)
Current participation in migration negatively associated with asset ownership	Current participation in migration positively but moderately associated with asset ownership
Past participation in migration not associated with asset ownership	Past participation in migration strongly and positively associated with asset ownership
Current remittances positively associated with asset ownership	Current remittances positively associated with asset ownership

**Table 9.3 Caïomete and Braïma Sori: a comparative summary of key features with respect to migration and its effects upon welfare**

In the meantime, we explicitly set out to ascertain the development effects of migration in these two villages in a more structural sense than just welfare improvement, and this has led us to look into the realm of production and how it is that the dynamics brought on by migration appear to have affected productive activities and relations. In this respect, too, we have found important differences between the two villages that can be accounted for by reference to the features that we have been recalling and highlighting throughout this chapter – in terms of livelihoods and production, on the one hand, and the features of migration, on the other.

Thus, in the case of Caïomete it is difficult to identify any substantial structural effects of migration upon production. As a consequence of the likely ‘negative’ self-selection of the migrants, the characteristics of their migration trajectories, the relative weakness of their economic linkages with their households of origin and the constraints to

upwards class differentiation in this village context, we find that migration does not appear to have brought on any substantial facilitating effects upon either the intensification and modernisation of production or the expansion of social-productive arrangements of a proto-capitalist kind. The statistical associations between past migration, present migration and remittances, on the one hand, and crop outputs and the demand for labour, on the other, are weak and inconsistent. Based both on that and on qualitative evidence, no convincing link between migration/remittances and the expansion/modernisation of agricultural activity along capitalist lines can be identified. If anything, it seems that the out-migration of many individuals from some of the poorest households may in fact have reduced the local labour supply and thereby further constrained the transition to capitalist forms of organisation of production, even though we have also seen that the constraints to that transition largely lay elsewhere in this particular context.

The qualitative and quantitative evidence from Braima Sori makes for a different story. The very significant level of remittances sent back to the village have not only enabled a substantial improvement in terms of standard of living, but also enabled some of the remittance-recipient households to engage more extensively in the hiring-in of agricultural labourers, especially from outside the village. However, there is some ambiguity to these results. Specifically, it seems that the positive statistical association between current migration and remittances, on the one hand, and the demand for labour, on the other, does not quite translate into greater crop outputs by remittance-recipient households. This suggests that the enhanced reliance on hired agricultural labour largely serves to make up for the reduction in the household labour pool caused by migration, rather than to enhance agricultural production. In a few cases, there is even a substitution effect: two households in the sample have completely withdrawn from local economic activity following migration by their former male heads, thus having becoming solely reliant on migrant remittances for their livelihood.

Still, among the Braima Sori households that have seen their migratory cycles through to completion, especially in Europe, we find more convincing evidence of a link between migration and structural development. This is neither automatic nor universal: several former migrants who decided to return as a consequence of persistent unemployment explicitly regretted having regarded migration as a permanent substitute for local agricultural production rather than as a strategic way to accumulate resources and invest them in the expansion and modernisation of agricultural production. However, amongst the former international migrants, there are some who did just that, and who now

account for the greater average herds, crop outputs, and reliance on animal traction and hired labour among former migrants when compared to the village average. This handful of more dynamic agricultural producers is thus beginning to exhibit some convincing signs of engaging in expanded accumulation reliant on the hiring of wage labour, even though the process is still at an incipient stage. There are few of these, but in so far as they have typically participated in international migration at some time in the past and been able to draw on accumulated resources from those migratory experiences in order to expand the scale of production and introduce changes to its character, they constitute the most convincing evidence of a structural migration-development nexus in our two case-study sites.

<b>Caionete</b>	<b>Braima Sori</b>
Current migration negatively but moderately associated with labour demand	Current migration positively but moderately associated with labour demand
Past migration not associated with demand for agricultural labour, positively and moderately associated with demand for non-agricultural labour	Past migration positively associated with labour demand
Remittances not associated with the demand for agricultural labour, negatively associated with the demand for non-agricultural labour	Remittances positively but moderately associated with labour demand
Current migration negatively associated with labour supply	Current migration positively but moderately associated with labour supply (typically simple provision of non-agricultural labour)
Past migration positively associated with labour supply	Past migration positively but moderately associated with labour supply (typically simple provision of non-agricultural labour)
Current remittances negatively but moderately associated with labour supply	Current remittances positively but moderately associated with labour supply
Positive but moderate association between current migration and outputs per adult of both rice and cashew nuts	Inconsistent association between present migration and outputs per adult of the main crops
Negative but moderate association between past migration and output per adult of rice; positive association between past migration and output per adult of cashew nuts	Positive and consistent association between past migration and outputs per adult of the main crops
Output per adult of rice positively associated with remittances; no association between output per adult of cashew nuts and remittances	Moderate and inconsistent association between output of the various crops and remittances

**Table 9.4 Caionete and Braima Sori: a comparative summary of key features with respect to the social-productive effects of migration**

No reliance on animal traction	Reliance on animal traction and ownership of animal-powered tools positively associated with past participation in migration
Negative association between herd size and past participation in migration (the only exception being former migrants to Europe, in which case the association is a positive one)	Positive association between herd size and past participation in migration

**Table 9.4 (continued): Caiomete and Braima Sori: a comparative summary of key features with respect to the social-productive effects of migration**

## **9.2 The bigger picture**

Among the general conclusions that can be drawn from these two village case-studies, we find the fact that the contribution of migration to welfare enhancement in the migrants' contexts of origin is largely dependent on a combination of two main factors: the qualitative characteristics of the migration flows, especially in terms of socioprofessional incorporation, and the character and strength of the linkages between the migrants and their households and communities of origin. As a consequence of this, that contribution to welfare enhancement cannot be simply assumed, given that it may occur to a greater or lesser extent depending on factors that are often locally-specific. In its turn, the contribution of migration to structurally changing productive activities and relations is even more demanding: even in contexts where migration serves an important function as a livelihood strategy and plays a very significant role in terms of enhancing local income and welfare for the migrants' households and communities of origin, it is not inevitable that migration will serve either to catalyse or to further structural change. Basically, it all depends on the constraints to such a change, both at the local level and at that of the social formation as a whole.

Previously in this thesis, I have discussed some of these obstacles to social-productive change in the context of Guinea-Bissau. Some have a local character and consist of such things as the availability of land, the tenurial regime, or social norms and institutions with regard to inequality and commodification. Along with the characteristics of the migrants and the weaker economic linkages between the latter and their households of origin, these go a long way towards accounting for the more static picture that we find in Caiomete compared to Braima Sori. However, other significant barriers to structural change are wider in scope and make themselves manifest at the level of the social formation as a

whole. We have addressed these in Chapter 6, drawing attention to such things as the constraining effect of infrastructure (both physical and institutional) upon the incentives to productive capitalist investment and accumulation.

One may well argue that, *a priori*, it is difficult to find as propitious a local context in Guinea-Bissau as Braima Sori for migration to catalyse structural changes to production: large streams of income as a consequence of migration and remittances, social norms amenable to the accumulation of wealth, abundant land, abundant labour supplies. Yet, even in Braima Sori, and after 25 years of engagement in migration, only a handful of local producers show signs of beginning to engage in expanded capitalist accumulation. Why is this? Arguably, because of the supra-local constraints that we have referred to above. Simply put, it is difficult to be a viable capitalist entrepreneur in rural Guinea-Bissau, for constraints exist at every level: a limited domestic market; poor road infrastructure; poor storage facilities and lack of electrical supply; an oligopsonic structure of demand characterising the value chains of the key crops; expensive harbour dues at Bissau harbour; demands for bribes at road checkpoints; insecurity of tenure; a fiscal regime that is disproportionately concentrated on exports for lack of other taxable bases; and the deterrent effect of political instability and a recent history of conflict upon relatively fixed investments.

In such a context, experience in undertaking merchant capitalist activities does not quite constitute a facilitating factor for engagement in productive capitalism – rather, it often constitutes a *substitute* for the latter, insofar as trade and commerce are largely able to overcome or circumvent many of the aforementioned constraints to productive capitalism. In particular, domestic merchant activities are not faced with the very difficult task of competing in the international market under a disadvantageous cost structure. Neither are they constrained by the difficulty of competing against imported products whose own cost structures allow for tremendous economies of scale, as is the case with the very cheap imported rice that floods the rural markets of Guinea-Bissau. Additionally, the ‘circulating’ character of capital in the context of merchant activities has a lesser degree of risk associated with it than fixed capital, which constitutes an important advantage in a setting characterised by considerable political instability and insecurity. All of this suggests that, under the current conditions, migration can hardly be expected to bring about quick and generalised structural agrarian change even in those few migratory contexts that are as favourable as Braima Sori – let alone those akin to Caiomete, which are doubtless much more common. This should not obfuscate the very important and beneficial function of

migration as a livelihood strategy (first and foremost for the migrants themselves, but also, to a greater or lesser extent, for their households and communities of origin), nor the fact that we have identified an unquestionable link between successful migration and the enhancement of agricultural production in the case of Braima Sori. The key issue is that generalised agrarian change at the level of the social formation as a whole is faced with additional obstacles other than just a lack of initial money capital; migration, even in the most favourable contexts, can only go so far in terms of overcoming those obstacles.

Now, although a major focus of our attention has been on the local effects of migration upon rural communities, it is clear that some of the development effects of migration are neither local nor rural in character. In the context of Guinea-Bissau, it is sometimes the case that migrants relocate to urban contexts, especially Bissau, upon returning to the country following the completion of a migratory experience. And there is extensive anecdotal evidence of these migrants doing such things as setting up commercial ventures in those new locations or investing in taxis and mini-vans for transporting people, often hiring others to operate them. Remittances and accumulated savings from labour migration have very significant quantitative weight in this economy, and serve not only to ensure and improve the livelihoods of hundreds of thousands of people across the country, but also to increase domestic demand for many products – and, occasionally, to enable investments in a number of sectors whose cost, demand and risk structures pose less disincentives to entry by migrants, former migrants and migrant relatives as prospective entrepreneurs. The problem is that there are few such sectors in the context of this social formation – and neither larger-scale capitalist agriculture nor manufacturing, in particular, count themselves amongst those relatively accessible and unconstrained sectors.

As far as human development and welfare are concerned, Guinea-Bissau has undergone both gains and losses as a consequence of international migration. The losses have had to do mainly with the reductions to an already very small pool of skilled professionals in key areas like education, engineering and, especially, the health sector. But these losses appear to be clearly outweighed by the effect of upwards of 7-9% of GDP consistently entering the country as remittances (this being the official figures for *formal* remittances in recent years, thus significantly underestimating their actual significance) and being channelled directly to numerous poor households across the country. There can be little doubt that Guinea-Bissau, and especially many migrants and migrant households, would be dramatically worse off in a scenario without migration. But this is not the same as saying that migration has proven able to bring on *development*, if by the latter we mean



such structural changes as modernisation, productivity increases and changes in social-productive relations. In these latter respects, the evidence from this country case-study leads to more balanced and sobering conclusions.

## 10. Theoretical implications and final remarks

### 10.1 Back to theory

The first part of this thesis, immediately after the Introduction, presented and discussed a set of competing or complementary theories on migration, development and the migration-development nexus. The specific theoretical choices made with respect to each of these topics were then used to inform the research questions and the choice of methods used in the empirical investigation on Guinea-Bissau (Part II of this thesis), leading on to the conclusions presented in Chapter 9. Now, this section brings the discussion full circle by drawing on the empirical evidence and conclusions from the case-study of Guinea-Bissau in order to assess the usefulness of the various theories in accounting for the processes and dynamics identified in this particular social formation.

We started out with an overview of the various theoretical accounts of the causes (i.e. determinants) of migration. A major dividing line was identified between methodologically-individualist theories of migration, of greater or lesser sophistication, and historical-structural accounts – a loose but complementary set of theoretical contributions whose main distinguishing features consist of their rejection of methodological individualism, rational choice and hypothetical-deductivism, as well as their focus on actually-existing processes of a historical and structural character (among which the compulsions and demands associated with historical capitalism loom large). While addressing the latter set of theories and justifying my adhesion to it, I called for a renewed historical-structural synthesis bringing together those theoretical contributions that focus on the processes affecting both migrant-producing and migrant-attracting areas, in addition to incorporating theoretical insights from more abstract partial contributions such as migration systems and migration network theories, which are fully compatible with a historical-structural ‘core’ while being *per se* incapable of accounting for actually-existing migration outcomes.

In the discussion of migration in the context of Guinea-Bissau in the previous chapters, we have found that an interpretation based on structural causes and factors indeed provides the best available explanation of this aspect of social reality. Throughout

that discussion, I have repeatedly highlighted the predominant causal significance of structural factors: with regard to migrant-producing areas, these have included, depending on the cases, the violence and compulsions associated with colonialism, the urban bias of post-independence developments, demographic pressure upon the land, and tenurial structures and regimes; with respect to migrant-attracting areas, these have included, again depending on the cases, issues of land availability, labour demands in neighbouring plantation economies, the urban bias of post-independence developments (again) and the structural demand for relatively low-skilled immigrant labour in foreign contexts like Portugal and France.

All of these factors are historical and structural in their character, however much they may have been catalysed, in each *local* context, by more or less ‘accidental’ events. When we analyse the concrete historical form taken on by the processes brought on by these structural factors, migration systems and networks theories come in: for example, amongst all the potential ‘host’ contexts with a structural demand for immigrant labour, mass migration from Guinea-Bissau followed routes that were determined systemically, though such factors as colonial history and language, and then acquired momentum as a consequence of the inertia of migrant networks.

The explanatory power of the latter account puts to shame any simplistic attempt at interpretation built on rational-choice decisions, by individuals or households, based on income differentials or the incompleteness of markets – which, for example, are completely unable of explaining why equally poor (or even poorer) regions in Guinea-Bissau have not experienced significant out-migration. Individuals may make decisions that are more or less rational, but the crux of the explanation inevitably lies in the structural context framing those decisions – and this has been apparent throughout this thesis. The epistemological, methodological and theoretical superiority of the historical-structural account of the causes of migration has therefore been fully vindicated by this empirical investigation, especially if complemented with the ‘lateral’ contributions of migration systems and migration networks theories.

Now, historical migration in and from Guinea-Bissau is a long-standing phenomenon which predates, by a long while, the emergence and spread of commodification and capitalist social-productive relations that we have also been addressing. This is not because the latter do not potentially constitute significant determinants of migration through the disruption they introduce, but rather because, first,

both of these processes have been occurring in comparatively belated fashion on Guinea-Bissau and, second, because historical and structural factors other than commodification and the transition to capitalism are capable of triggering mass migration. It is therefore important that any general historical-structural theory of (or synthesis on) migration does not *exclusively* emphasise the dissemination of capitalist social-productive relations as a cause of human mobility, and makes allowance for the interplay of a greater variety of historical and structural causes. Nevertheless, even though the historical-structural approach remains limited in its ability to predict migration outcomes (like all other approaches, for that is the nature of social reality), it unquestionably remains, as argued by Massey *et al* (1998), the best available theoretical apparatus for addressing and interpreting this social phenomenon.

The next theoretical debate that we have brought to bear in this thesis concerned the explanation and interpretation of long-run socioeconomic development and change (Chapter 3). Here, I reviewed some competing theories on what is to account for the differential wealth of nations, as it were – from factor endowments (leading on to the expectation of a convergence) to the extraction of surplus by more advanced social formations, to the internal social-productive structure of the social formations in question. I explicitly rejected “Smithian” explanations of development for their conflation of both work/labour/free labour and wealth/capital (i.e. their disregard for social relations of production), and I subsequently followed Robert Brenner in characterising, and therefore partly dismissing, neo-Marxist development theories as also being neo-Smithian.

Instead, I explained my adhesion to the classical Marxist (i.e. historical materialist) theoretical tradition by affirming the fundamental causal link between the social organisation of production and the dynamics of accumulation, hence development. However, I also stressed that each social formation does not develop in isolation from the broader world system of which it is a part, whether through colonial political domination, trade, foreign investment, migration, etc. For that reason, I concluded that chapter by endorsing the theoretical proposition that the material development of a given social formation is primarily a function of the internal evolution of its social-productive structure, *constrained* both quantitatively and qualitatively by external political-economic factors. In other words, a call for a sensible middle ground that takes into account the interplay of both internal and external political-economic determinants, while acknowledging the ultimate primacy of the former.

The evidence and conclusions from the empirical case-study of Guinea-Bissau arguably vindicate this theoretical standpoint. In exceedingly summary terms (which do some violence to the complexity of the phenomenon in question), Guinea-Bissau is poorer and less developed than most other nations because throughout its history and up until the present time it has been predominantly characterised by social-productive arrangements that are relatively static with respect to accumulation and the development of the productive forces, at least compared to more widely capitalist contexts. When Guinea-Bissau came into contact with Portuguese colonialism, the latter did not constitute a progressive force. Quite the contrary: in its merchant phase, colonialism undertook a brutal ravage of the local population and potential labour reserves through slavery; in its properly imperialist phase, not only did it proceed to extract through trade a meaningful share of the surplus produced, it also deliberately constrained the possibility of any endogenous transition to capitalism and failed, by virtue of its own feebleness, to bring about such a transition 'from above'. In its turn, post-independence socialist-inspired developmentalism also failed to structurally change the predominant logic of production: it unduly emphasised the urban-industrial sector in an inadequate manner and, rather than seeking to enhance agricultural output through agrarian change, it effectively constrained it through crushing options in terms of the domestic terms of trade and the external exchange rate. Finally, the turn to market-friendly liberalisation was arguably equally unsuccessful, for, in addition to having been beset by cronyism, the possibility of an ensuing sustained dynamics of accumulation has been constrained ever since by a number of structural elements, key among which are the infrastructural vulnerabilities inherited from the past; the country's participation in the international division of labour through specialisation in a crop that has experienced declining terms of trade and whose global value chain effectively extracts most of the surplus away from the country through trade; the disincentives to productive capitalism associated with political instability and the risk (and actuality) of conflict; and the incentives to the country's elites engaging in strategies of accumulation through control of rents that originate externally, or at best through merchant capitalism, to the detriment of productive capitalism.

Now, as argued in Bernstein (2010b:12), it is a common mistake for researchers to unduly extrapolate from their own research context as if its features were more broadly, or even universally, shared. Here, as elsewhere, I should take care not to fall prey to this common tendency. However, one may still put forth an assessment of the extent to which the evidence from this case-study corroborates each of the competing theories that we

have addressed in Chapter 3, if only for this particular context. In that sense, if the narrative laid out in the previous paragraphs is to be found convincing, we are forced to accept the superior explanatory power of the historical-materialist theoretical account of development, rather than any competing one. We also find, as previously argued in theoretical terms with respect to the tension between the classical Marxist and neo-Marxist theoretical accounts, that any attempt to locate the transition to capitalism (or the lack thereof), and its development consequences, solely by reference to internal processes and determinants *fails*, for several externally-induced compulsions and constraints have been brought to bear on several occasions as necessary for an adequate explanation. However, the attempt to explain the underdevelopment of Guinea-Bissau by arguing that it is due to the systematic international extraction of surplus from a social formation whose total surplus-generating potential would otherwise be identical to that of more advanced countries fails even more spectacularly, simply because even today there are absolutely no signs of such a surplus-generating potential to be found. We are only able to arrive at a fully satisfactory account of the development and underdevelopment of this particular social formation when we bring together the insights from these two currents of Marxism, by stressing the fundamental determining role played by the internal social organisation of production vis-à-vis accumulation and the development of the productive forces, while acknowledging that the internal social organisation of production is itself co-determined by external factors (and that, in the history of more 'backward' social formations, a part of the surplus has systematically been siphoned off to more advanced ones).

In the meantime, I should emphasise the fact that the overwhelmingly pre-capitalist history of Guinea-Bissau up until the present day is *not* a static history, for, obviously, plenty of meaningful developments have occurred throughout, including developments of a deep structural character. The history of this social formation can only be characterised as relatively static from the point of view of sustained accumulation and that most crucial development of all which makes sustained accumulation possible – the transition to the capitalist mode of production. That the history of Guinea-Bissau is far from static was amply illustrated throughout this thesis by reference to both the past and the present. As regards the latter, and particularly with respect to processes of agrarian change currently under way (which are of special significance in this predominantly agrarian country), I have identified processes of a structural character which themselves have implications for ongoing theoretical debates. For example, I have found abundant evidence of the commodification of subsistence, especially in relation to the generalisation of cashew

cultivation, as well as convincing evidence of deagrarianisation, especially in association with multilocality, migration and the diversification to local off-farm activities. What I certainly have not found is any evidence of repeasantisation – if anything, rural Bissau-Guineans as a whole have been becoming more reliant on markets and less reliant on independent farming. Whether or not the tendency towards commodification is likely to proceed further in the future, encompassing also the key markets for land and labour, and what kind of consequences it is that that may bring about, is a question open to debate – I briefly touch upon that question in the next and final section.

Before coming on to that, this discussion of the theoretical implications of this empirical investigation would not be complete without reference to the third main theoretical debate that I have referred to in the context of this thesis, which concerned the development consequences of migration. We have seen that, in that respect, “Smithian” approaches to the migration-development nexus fail to appreciate the potential *structural* feedback effects of migration, often stating the obvious through such propositions as “skilled migration reduces the pool of skilled workers, thereby reducing the average quality of labour and constraining productivity”. Indeed, there is a remarkable lack of theoretical development within this large and expanding field, which, I have argued, is largely due to the disregard for the important and illuminating contributions made by some authors working in the historical-materialist tradition. At the end of chapter 4, I turned to the latter for a sounder theoretical basis, which emphasises the various and contingent ways in which migration can contribute to either the conservation or dissolution of existing social relations of production.

The evidence from my case-study of Guinea-Bissau showed that, beyond the self-evident statements alluded to above, there is little to be gained from theoretical approaches to the migration-development nexus that assume all workers to constitute a more or less homogeneous production factor, and all money or wealth to constitute capital. The micro-level evidence from our two village-level case-studies showed, for example, that money remittances (for all their welfare-enhancing importance) are hardly ever mobilised as capital (in a proper sense); that whether or not they are mobilised as such has crucial consequences in terms of the dynamics of accumulation; and that whether or not that happens depends on factors and constraints that are completely disregarded by the mainstream migration-development literature by virtue of its theoretical inadequacy. Yet another example consists of the effect of migration upon labour supplies, which may or may not constitute the active constraint preventing the transition to capitalism and

sustained accumulation, depending, once again, on other structural and contingent factors – hardly accounted for by the inadequate theoretical concept of the “marginal productivity of labour”. Thus, one can certainly argue that the theoretical choices made in the context of this research project have been vindicated also in this respect. And as concerns the bigger picture of the social sciences, this constitutes additional evidence of the theoretical and explanatory superiority of those approaches which address social phenomena through a materialist, structural and historical lens while making allowance for contingency and variability.

### **10.2 *Whither Guinea-Bissau?***

In my view, no way to conclude this thesis could be more appropriate than by giving back central stage to Guinea-Bissau in its own right and discussing its development prospects. For all the interest and relevance of the broader theoretical debates, bringing the discussion back to the level of this social formation and the people who constitute it, produce it and reproduce it serves as a tribute to a people who have experienced much suffering, destitution and violence throughout history, but who have also shown great ingenuity and dignity on countless occasions.

The picture of this social formation that I have been putting forth throughout this thesis can hardly be considered optimistic. Once differential development dynamics set in between Sub-Saharan Africa and the Euroatlantic world – as a consequence of very long-run geographical factors, as laid out in Diamond (1997), and then the relatively accidental propensity by the latter to constituting the homeland of capitalism, as proposed in Wood (2002) –, and became manifest as of the dawn of the merchant-colonial, and then capitalist, eras, the prospects of Sub-Saharan Africa developing autonomously and unconstrained withered away. In the case of Guinea-Bissau and as we have seen in this thesis (and recalled in the previous section), a number of additional deleterious factors and events were then superposed on top of one another in the colonial and post-colonial periods, concurring to account for the current situation of this social formation and the current predicament of its population.

Throughout this exposition, I have emphasised the centrality of the capitalist organisation of production for the emergence and sustenance of a dynamics of accumulation, and referred to the latter as a pre-condition for self-sustained productivity



gains and, ultimately, improvements in material well-being. Historically, the only alternative to this has so far been the socialist development of the productive forces operated through the State, which in some contexts has certainly proved capable of doing just that (albeit in most cases with serious drawbacks of a different nature); but it is my contention, however speculative and uncertain, that the prospects of 'socialism in one country' viably sustaining itself seem less and less of a possibility in today's world of globalising imperialism – especially in the case of a small and dependent social formation like present-day Guinea-Bissau, which finds itself at a tremendous distance from the historical frontier of the evolution of capitalism.

Whatever the case, whether operated through the State or by the bourgeoisie, the revolutionising of social-productive relations presents itself as a necessary pre-condition for sustained productivity improvements and accumulation. Without the latter, exogenously-induced improvements in welfare (through foreign aid and international co-operation, for example – or indeed through migration and remittances) certainly play a vital role for many people, but ultimately are at best capable of mitigating the consequences of belated and constrained development.

If all of the above is to be believed, then the prospects for accumulation and development in this context seem to rest on the possibility of the furthering of the transition to the capitalist mode of production. As has been the case historically and as I have previously mentioned in this thesis following Byres (1996), this transition may take place from above – through the politically-operated resolution of the obstacles to capitalism that we have seen to exist in this context, probably (but not necessarily) involving the inflow of foreign capital –, or else from below – through the endogenous emergence of a local bourgeoisie that engages in capitalist production and accumulation to a meaningful extent. In this thesis, and by virtue of its central focus on the development effects of migration, I have largely emphasised the latter, implicitly raising the possibility of Guinea-Bissau developing along the lines of the so-called "American path" to capitalism (Bernstein 2010:29-31), with migration possibly contributing to treading that path. Not surprisingly, we have found many obstacles to this possibility – the American path is not easily replicable in a poor social formation that is fully integrated in the world economy, more than two hundred years after the original American transition took place.

Nevertheless, we have also seen signs of major changes under way, especially with regard to the commodification of subsistence, which typically precede – with a greater or

lesser delay – the full-fledged transition to capitalism. I have argued in favour of there being considerable likelihood of the commodification of land ensuing, at first in some regions and then possibly throughout the entire country. And while the local elites currently seem to show relatively little interest in engaging in productive capitalism, foreign capital is already manifesting its interest in entering the country to a more significant extent, although for the time being it remains mostly confined to natural resource extraction, trade and specific service sub-sectors. In the more or less distant future, foreign capital may possibly show an interest in undertaking agrarian and industrial production, thus engaging local labour-power to an increasingly meaningful extent. Given the current constraints to production, this remains a distant possibility; but if Marxist accounts of the inexorable need for capital to engage with and exploit an ever-increasing share of the world's potential labour-power are to be believed, it is nonetheless likely to occur.

Whether from above or from below, translating capitalist accumulation onto generalised well-being requires an additional pre-condition: class struggle allowing for a more equitable distribution of the social product. However, it is of course in the contradictory nature of capitalism that this cannot occur without itself compromising accumulation, for greater equity in the distribution of the social product amounts to a direct or indirect decrease in the rate of exploitation, which in turn constrains further expanded accumulation. But for unexpected developments occurring in the meantime, the best that can probably be hoped for Guinea-Bissau at present is an agrarian transition largely built on state-supported productivity-enhancing co-operative arrangements, involving the overcoming of the obstacles that I have repeatedly made reference to above in a relatively democratic and equitable manner, followed by a process of industrialisation that is also relatively co-operative and relatively democratic. Throughout this thesis and up until this final section, I have exclusively focused on non-normative analysis and refrained from putting forth normative statements, but I shall end it with one: let it be thus.

## **Appendix I - List of semi-structured interviews undertaken in the exploratory phase of fieldwork**

- 1) Mr. José Huco Monteiro:** Director-General of the National Commission for the Fight Against HIV-AIDS, former Minister of Education, former advisor to the President (Bissau, 10 November 2009);
- 2) Mr. Fernando Dias:** Secretary of State for the Bissau-Guinean Diaspora, former Secretary of State for International Co-operation (Bissau, 16 November 2009);
- 3) Mr. João Ribeiro Có:** Researcher at INEP, specialist in highly-skilled migration from Guinea-Bissau (Bissau, 18 November 2009);
- 4) Mr. Filomeno Cabral:** Secretary-General of the General Confederation of Independent Trade Unions of Guinea-Bissau (Bissau, 18 November 2009);
- 5) Mr. Artur Silva:** Minister of Education (Bissau, 19 November 2009);
- 6) Mr. Issa Jandi:** Director of the Research Department of the Directorate-General for Planning (Ministry of the Economy, Planning and Regional Integration) (Bissau, 19 November 2009);
- 7) Mr. Júlio Sanches:** Director for External Relations, Banco Regional de Solidariedade (Bissau branch) (Bissau, 19 November 2009);
- 8) Ms. Maria João Carreiro:** Consultant at SNV (Dutch non-profit international development organisation present in Guinea-Bissau) and specialist in the Bissau-Guinean diaspora (Bissau, 19 November 2009);
- 9) Ms. Carmen Pereira:** Resident Representative of the World Bank in Guinea-Bissau (Bissau, 23 November 2009);
- 10) Mr. Gaston Fonseca:** Resident Representative of the International Monetary Fund in Guinea-Bissau (Bissau, 24 November 2009);

- 11) **Mr. Moisés Lopes:** Commercial Director, Banco da África Ocidental (Bissau branch) (Bissau, 25 November 2009);
- 12) **Mr. Cheik Sall:** Director of the Research Department, Central Bank of West African States (BCEAO, Bissau branch) (Bissau, 25 November 2009);
- 13) **Mr. Francisco Tolentino:** Specialist in the cashew value chain at SNV (Dutch non-profit international development organisation present in Guinea-Bissau) (Bissau, 26 November 2009);
- 14) **Mr. Roberto Vieira:** Director of Economic and Financial Statistics, National Institute for Census and Statistics (Ministry of the Economy, Planning and Regional Integration) (Bissau, 1 December 2009);
- 15) **Mr. Dilson Lacerda:** Commercial Director, Banco da União (Bissau, 2 December 2009);
- 16) **Mr. Jamel Handem:** Coordinator of the Community-Led Rural Development Project (Bissau, 3 December 2009);
- 17) **Ms. Milanka Monteiro:** Head of Retail Banking, Ecobank (Bissau branch) (Bissau, 4 December 2009);
- 18) **Mr. Papa Mbodji:** Commercial Director, Western Union - SOFIB (Bissau, 12 December 2009).

## **Appendix II – Questionnaire used in the survey of migration and development (version 1 – Caiomete)**

Questionnaire Serial No.: \_\_\_\_\_ Name of the respondent: \_\_\_\_\_

Village/Area: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Survey Team: \_\_\_\_\_

### Section 1. General Household Information

1.1. How many adults (aged 15 or over) are currently permanent members of this stove? (*explain "permanent"*) \_\_\_\_\_ Men \_\_\_\_\_ Women

1.2. How many of these know how to read and write? \_\_\_\_\_ Men \_\_\_\_\_ Women

1.3. How many of these have in the past resided for more than 12 consecutive months away from the Cacheu region?

\_\_\_\_\_ Men \_\_\_\_\_ Women

1.3b. Where? \_\_\_\_\_

1.4. How many children (under 15 of age) are currently permanent members of this stove? \_\_\_\_\_

1.5. Is the main person making financial decisions on behalf of this stove a woman? \_\_\_\_\_

1.6 To which ethnic group(s) do the people that live in this house belong to?

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### Section 2. Migration

2.1 Are there people who used to be a part of this stove and are now living permanently away from this village? (*explain "permanently"*)

Yes ☐ No ☐ If so, how many? \_\_\_\_\_

**2.2** For each of these people, please indicate:

First name	Sex (M/F)	Age	Where is this person living now?	When did this person leave this stove (year)?	What is this person doing in the place where s/he is currently living? (If “working”, what does s/he currently do for a living?

**2.2** For each of these people, please indicate (continued):

First Name <i>(copy from last page)</i>	When did this person last visit this village? (year)	Did this person send any money in the last 12 months to anyone in this household?	If so, how was this money sent? (through friend or relatives /MoneyGram/Western Union/other method)?	What was this money used for?	Did this person send any other material, non-monetary help? (if “Yes”, what?)



### Section 3. Economic Activity and Production

**3.1a** Did the people that belong to this stove practice agriculture (directly or as employers) in the last 12 months?

Yes ☐ No (go to 3.10) ☐

**3.1b** Using whose land? (mark all that apply)

Land owned by people belonging to the stove ☐ Land owned by others ☐ By whom? \_\_\_\_\_

**3.1c** Was anything charged in return for using any of that land?

No ☐ Yes, money ☐ Yes, a share of the crop ☐ Yes, labour time ☐ Yes, other ☐ What? \_\_\_\_\_

**3.2** For the last agricultural cycle, indicate for each of the following crops:

	Was this crop produced?	Output (kilos)	Use (sale, barter, own consumption, other)
<b>3.2a Mangrove rice</b>			
<b>3.2b Upland rice</b>			
<b>3.2c Cashew nuts</b>			

**3.3** In the last 12 months, did any of the members of this stove perform: *Blima*? \_\_\_\_\_ *Ulemp/cadjar cor*? \_\_\_\_\_

**3.3b** If so, how many people and for how many days? *Blima*: \_\_\_\_\_ *Ulemp /Cadjar Cor*: \_\_\_\_\_

**3.4a** Besides the members of this stove, did anyone from this village work on any of these parcels in the last 12 months?

Yes ☐ In exchange for what? \_\_\_\_\_

No ☐

**3.4b** Did anyone from outside this village work on any of these parcels in the last 12 months?

Yes ☐ In exchange for what? \_\_\_\_\_

No ☐

**3.5** If any other people worked on these parcels in the last 12 months, at what times did this take place and what tasks did these people perform?

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**3.6** What is the maximum number of people that were *hired* to work on these parcels *at* any given time in the last 12 months? \_\_\_\_\_

**3.7a** Have the members of this stove ever sold land?

Yes ☐

No ☐

**3.7b** If so, to whom? \_\_\_\_\_

**3.7c** Have the members of this stove ever lost or forfeited land *in any other way*?

Yes ☐

No ☐

**3.7d** If so, how?

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**3.8** Do the members of this stove own cattle? Yes ☐ How many? \_\_\_\_\_ No ☐

**3.9** Did the members of this stove hire anyone to do any other task (*besides agricultural work*) in the last 12 months?

Yes ☐ Please state all non-agricultural tasks that these people were hired to perform:

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No ☐

**3.10** Did any of the members of this stove work for other people *from this village* in exchange for payment (money or other) in the last 12 months?

Yes ☐ How many of the members of this stove did so? \_\_\_\_\_

What tasks or jobs did they perform?

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No ☐

**3.11** Did any of the members of this stove work for other people *from outside this village* in exchange for payment (money or other) in the last 12 months?

Yes ☐ How many of the members of this stove did so? \_\_\_\_\_

What tasks or jobs did they perform?

---

No ☐

**3.12** What other sources of money income did the members of this stove benefit from in the last 12 months?

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**3.13** According to your estimation, the money received *in return for work* by the members of this stove in the last 12 months was:

**All** the income earned the members of this stove ☐

Half or more of all the income ☐

Less than half of all the income ☐

**No** money was earned in return for work in the last 12 months ☐

#### Section IV: Asset Ownership and Housing Characteristics

**4.1** Does this house have access to any form of power supply?

No ☐ Public supply (EAGB) ☐ Private generator ☐ Collective generator ☐ Solar panel ☐ Other ☐

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**4.2** Source of drinking water: (*indicate only the main one*)

Water from a well that belongs to the house ☐ Water from a collective well ☐

Water from a pump that belongs to the house ☐ Water from a collective pump ☐

Public supply (EAGB) ☐ River, stream, or lake ☐

Other ☐ (which? \_\_\_\_\_ )

**4.3** Which of the following assets do the members of this stove own?

Radio / Cassette player / CD player \_\_\_\_\_ TV \_\_\_\_\_ Cell phone \_\_\_\_\_ Bicycle \_\_\_\_\_ Fridge \_\_\_\_\_  
Motorcycle \_\_\_\_\_ Car or taxi \_\_\_\_\_ Gas or electric oven \_\_\_\_\_

**4.4** Type of roof covering:

Thatch ☐

Zinc ☐

Tiles ☐

Other ☐

What? \_\_\_\_\_

### **Section V: Subjective Assessment of Migration**

**5.1** In your opinion, has migration been good or bad for the members of your stove? Why?

**5.2** In your opinion, has migration been good or bad for the village as a whole? Why?

**Appendix III – Questionnaire used in the survey of migration  
and development (version 2 – Braima Sori)**

Questionnaire Serial No.: \_\_\_\_\_ Name of the respondent: \_\_\_\_\_

Village/Area: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Survey Team: \_\_\_\_\_

### Section 1. General Household Information

1.6. How many adults (aged 15 or over) are currently permanent members of this stove? (*explain "permanent"*) \_\_\_\_\_ Men \_\_\_\_\_ Women

1.7. How many of these know how to read and write? \_\_\_\_\_ Men \_\_\_\_\_ Women

1.8. How many of these have in the past resided for more than 12 consecutive months away from the Gabu region?

\_\_\_\_\_ Men \_\_\_\_\_ Women

1.3b. Where? \_\_\_\_\_

1.9. How many children (under 15 of age) are currently permanent members of this stove? \_\_\_\_\_

1.10. Is the main person making financial decisions on behalf of this stove a woman? \_\_\_\_\_

1.6 To which ethnic group(s) do the people that live in this house belong to?

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### Section 2. Migration

2.1 Are there people who used to be a part of this stove and are now living permanently away from this village? (*explain "permanently"*)

Yes ☐ No ☐ If so, how many? \_\_\_\_\_

**2.2** For each of these people, please indicate:

First name	Sex (M/F)	Age	Where is this person living now?	When did this person leave this stove (year)?	What is this person doing in the place where s/he is currently living? (If “working”, what does s/he currently do for a living?



**2.2** For each of these people, please indicate (continued):

First Name <i>(copy from last page)</i>	When did this person last visit this village? (year)	Did this person send any money in the last 12 months to anyone in this household?	If so, how was this money sent? (through friend or relatives /MoneyGram/Western Union/other method)?	What was this money used for?	Did this person send any other material, non-monetary help? (if “Yes”, what?)

### Section 3. Economic Activity and Production

**3.1a** Did the people that belong to this stove practice agriculture (directly or as employers) in the last 12 months?

Yes ☐ No (go to 3.10) ☐

**3.1b** Using whose land? (mark all that apply)

Land owned by people belonging to the stove ☐ Land owned by others ☐ By whom? \_\_\_\_\_

**3.1c** Was anything charged in return for using any of that land?

No ☐ Yes, money ☐ Yes, a share of the crop ☐ Yes, labour time ☐ Yes, other ☐ What? \_\_\_\_\_

**3.2** For the last agricultural cycle, indicate for each of the following crops:

	Was this crop produced?	Output (kilos)	Use (sale, barter, own consumption, other)
<b>3.2a Mangrove rice</b>			
<b>3.2b Upland rice</b>			
<b>3.2c Cashew nuts</b>			
<b>3.2d Groundnuts</b>			
<b>3.2e Cassava</b>			
<b>3.2f Maize</b>			
<b>3.2g Millet</b>			

**3.4a** Besides the members of this stove, did anyone from this village work on any of these parcels in the last 12 months?

Yes ☐ In exchange for what? \_\_\_\_\_

No ☐

**3.4b** Did anyone from outside this village work on any of these parcels in the last 12 months?

Yes ☐ In exchange for what? \_\_\_\_\_

No ☐

**3.5** If any other people worked on these parcels in the last 12 months, at what times did this take place and what tasks did these people perform?

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**3.6** What is the maximum number of people that were *hired* to work on these parcels *at* any given time in the last 12 months? \_\_\_\_\_

**3.7a** Have the members of this stove ever sold land?

Yes ☐

No ☐

**3.7b** If so, to whom? \_\_\_\_\_

**3.7c** Have the members of this stove ever lost or forfeited land *in any other way*?

Yes ☐

No ☐

**3.7d** If so, how?

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**3.8** Do the members of this stove own cattle? Yes ☐ How many? \_\_\_\_\_ No ☐

**3.8b** In the last 12 months, did the members of this stove sell any oxen? Yes ☐ How many? \_\_\_\_\_ No ☐

**3.9** Did the members of this stove hire anyone to do any other task (*besides agricultural work*) in the last 12 months?

Yes ☐ Please state all non-agricultural tasks that these people were hired to perform:

---

No ☐

**3.10** Did any of the members of this stove work for other people *from this village* in exchange for payment (money or other) in the last 12 months?

Yes ☐ No ☐ If so, How many of the members of this stove did so? \_\_\_\_\_

What tasks or jobs did they perform? \_\_\_\_\_

**3.11** Did any of the members of this stove work for other people *from outside this village* in exchange for payment (money or other) in the last 12 months?

Yes ☐ How many of the members of this stove did so? \_\_\_\_\_

What tasks or jobs did they perform?

---

No ☐

**3.12** What other sources of money income did the members of this stove benefit from in the last 12 months?

---

**3.13** According to your estimation, the money received *in return for work* by the members of this stove in the last 12 months was:

**All** the income earned the members of this stove ☐

Half or more of all the income ☐

Less than half of all the income ☐

**No** money was earned in return for work in the last 12 months ☐

#### Section IV: Asset Ownership and Housing Characteristics

**4.1** Does this house have access to any form of power supply?

No ☐ Public supply (EAGB) ☐ Private generator ☐ Collective generator ☐ Solar panel ☐ Other ☐

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**4.2** Source of drinking water: (*indicate only the main one*)

Water from a well that belongs to the house ☐ Water from a collective well ☐

Water from a pump that belongs to the house ☐ Water from a collective pump ☐

Public supply (EAGB) ☐ River, stream, or lake ☐

Other ☐ (which? \_\_\_\_\_ )

**4.3** Which of the following assets do the members of this stove own?

Radio / Cassette player / CD player \_\_\_\_\_ TV \_\_\_\_\_ Cell phone \_\_\_\_\_ Bicycle \_\_\_\_\_ Fridge \_\_\_\_\_  
Motorcycle \_\_\_\_\_ Car or taxi \_\_\_\_\_ Gas or electric oven \_\_\_\_\_ Plough (pulled by oxen) \_\_\_\_\_ Seeder \_\_\_\_\_  
Weeder \_\_\_\_\_ Cart \_\_\_\_\_ Tractor \_\_\_\_\_

**4.3b** Was animal traction used in agricultural work in the last 12 months? If so, what animals were used? \_\_\_\_\_

**4.4** Type of roof covering:

Thatch ☐ Zinc ☐  
Tiles ☐ Other ☐ What? \_\_\_\_\_

### Section V: Subjective Assessment of Migration

**5.1** In your opinion, has migration been good or bad for the members of your stove? Why?

**5.2** In your opinion, has migration been good or bad for the village as a whole? Why?

## Appendix IV: Principal component analysis and construction of the asset index

In order to identify the main patterns with respect to the level of household wealth in Caiomete and Braima Sori, as well as its association with other variables, a decision was made in the context of this research project to adopt an indirect approach, whereby ownership of durable household assets was used as a proxy for household wealth. The rationale for this approach lies in the fact that direct questions on monetary wealth and income often prove more sensitive and liable to voluntary and involuntary bias on the part of the respondents than questions on the current ownership of household assets. Additionally, the characteristics of the context under analysis (a country where only a few thousand – mostly urban – people have bank accounts and where most inhabitants of rural areas store their wealth in a limited number of physical forms) presumably increase the likelihood that a selection of durable household assets such as the one adopted here provides a valid and reliable indication of the underlying, unobserved variable ‘wealth’ (or permanent income).

The specific procedure that was used, following Filmer and Pritchett (2001), McKenzie (2005) and Johnston and Wall (2008), consisted of using principal component analysis (PCA) as the basis for the construction of an asset index, which was then computed for all 108 households in the sample and used in the subsequent analysis. The results yielded by this approach have been shown in the literature to be consistent with expenditure and income measures (cf. references indicated above).

In this particular case, the procedure consisted of the following steps:

- i) preparing a subset of the survey data comprising the 108 households (units of analysis) x 11 asset variables (ten categorical, one scale variable<sup>181</sup>);

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<sup>181</sup> The ten categorical variables assumed the value “1” in the case of the households that reported owning a given asset and the value “0” for those that did not. The ten durable household assets considered were: (i) diesel generator; (ii) radio or stereo; (iii) TV; (iv) cell phone; (v) bicycle; (vi) fridge; (vii) motorcycle; (viii) car (or van or truck); (ix) gas or electric stove; and (x) zinc rooftop. The

- ii) running PCA on this data set, subject to the specification that only one principal component (the one with the greatest eigenvalue) was to be retained;
- iii) saving the 108 *component scores* thus computed by SPSS as the vector of values assumed by our asset index  $s_i$  across the 108 households.

For each household  $i$ , the value of  $s_i$  (which was automatically computed by SPSS) corresponds to the sum of eleven asset scores  $s_{ij}$ , each of which was computed thus:

$$s_{ij} = \text{Score of household } i \text{ on asset } j =$$

$$= (\text{value of asset variable } j \text{ for household } i - \text{mean of asset variable } j) / \text{standard deviation of asset variable } j * \text{weight (score coefficient)}$$

The same is to say, the asset index was constructed as a weighted sum of the standardised values assumed by the asset variables in each household, with the weights corresponding to the score coefficients obtained through principal component analysis. It has zero mean, which implies that the fact that a household exhibits an asset index score of 0 does not mean that the household in question does not own any of these items, but rather that its endowment in terms of these assets (thus weighted) is exactly average.

Using this procedure as the basis for subsequent inferences on household wealth/permanent income relies on the assumption, which has been validated in other contexts, that “household long-run wealth explains the maximum variance (and covariance) in the asset variables” (Filmer and Pritchett 2001:117) and that, as a consequence, the first principal component identified through PCA of a set of durable household asset data constitutes a valid proxy for household long-run wealth<sup>182</sup>.

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eleventh variable included in the principal components analysis was the number of cows/owen owned by the household, which is a scale variable (i.e. it has a meaningful metric).

<sup>182</sup> This assumption is especially appropriate when the asset variables have a categorical character (i.e. absence/presence, or 0/1) and range from common (almost all the households own them) to rare (few households own them) without there being substitute assets, which implies that the share of households that own each of these assets is monotonically increasing. The latter fact, along with the categorical character of the variables, causes the means and the standard deviations of the asset variables to exhibit an especially strong relationship, thus ensuring that the asset index thus computed constitutes a good indicator of long-run wealth.



The PCA exercise undertaken in this case yielded the SPSS output that is presented in the following pages (Tables A4.1-A4.4).

Initial Eigenvalues		
Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
<b>3,779</b>	<b>34,357</b>	<b>34,357</b>
1,661	15,096	49,453
1,064	9,674	59,127
,930	8,459	67,586
,787	7,154	74,740
,657	5,971	80,711
,549	4,991	85,702
,468	4,257	89,959
,449	4,078	94,037
,362	3,292	97,329
,294	2,671	100,000

**Table A4.1: Total Variance Explained**

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		,805
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	331,462
	df	55
	Sig.	,000

**Table A4.2: KMO and Bartlett's Test**

	Component
	1
Number of cows	,739
Electricity	,480
Radio	,603
TV	,759
Cell phone	,445
Bicycle	,552
Fridge	,731
Motorcycle	,733
Car	,587
Gas or electric stove	-,260
Zinc rooftop	,276

**Table A4.3: Component Matrix**

	Component
	1
Number of cows	,196
Electricity	,127
Radio	,160
TV	,201
Cell phone	,118
Bicycle	,146
Fridge	,193
Motorcycle	,194
Car	,155
Gas or electric stove	-,069
Zinc rooftop	,073

**Table A4.4: Component Score  
Coefficient Matrix**

The Tables presented in the previous pages provide us with a substantial amount of information. The key aspects that should be noticed are the following:

- Table A4.1 indicates that the first principal component obtained through PCA accounts for 34.4% of the variance in the data set. This implies that factors other than component 1 account for the remaining 65.6%, which might be deemed excessive. However, one should bear in mind that the implicit assumption in this exercise is not that household wealth accounts for all the variance in asset ownership, but rather that it is the single factor accounting for the largest share of the variance. Moreover, 34% may in fact be considered a relatively high figure, if we take into account that in the example provided in Filmer and Pritchett (2001) (where the use of this type of asset index is validated based on expenditure data), the first principal component only accounts for 26% of the variance.
- Table A4.2 provides the results of two standard tests of the quality of the data in the context of principal component analysis. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy indicates how large the partial correlations among the variables are. It varies between 0 and 1, with a value of 0.805 (as in this case) usually being considered as indicative of “strong” common variance ( $>0.9$  would be “very strong”), which is a condition for PCA to be appropriate. In turn, Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity is based on the Chi-Square statistic, and the resulting p-value indicates the probability that the variables are in fact uncorrelated (which, again, would render the PCA model inappropriate). In this case, the p-value is 0.000, which means that we may feel secure in the use of PCA.
- Table A4.3 shows the component loadings, i.e. the correlation coefficients between the variables and the component. When squared, these represent the extent to which the variation in a given variable is accounted for by the component: component loadings greater than 0.7 are indicative of variables for which half or more ( $>0.49$ ) of the variance is explained by the component. In this particular case, household ownership of motorcycle, TV, fridge and the number of cattle heads all have loadings greater than 0.7, which indicates that these variables are highly correlated with the underlying component 1 (“long-run wealth”). By contrast, the

variation in the ownership of zinc rooftops and gas/electric stoves seems to be mostly explained by factors other than “wealth”<sup>183</sup>.

- Finally, Table A4.4 contains the component score coefficients, which consist of a linear transformation of the component loadings (through division by the eigenvalue). These correspond to the weightings used to compute the household scores, in such a way as to ensure that the latter have zero mean and a standard deviation of one. They show that ownership of a fridge, TV, motorcycle or a relatively large number of cows significantly increases the (total) household score, whereas ownership of any of the other assets does not contribute as much (i.e. those assets are weaker indicators of household wealth). In the case of gas/electric stoves, the contribution is in fact negative, reflecting the fact that households that own this item are in fact likely to be poorer in all other respects.

As a final validation exercise prior to the subsequent use of the vector of household scores as a proxy for household wealth, the following Table (A4.5) follows the procedure adopted in Filmer and Pritchett (2001), whereby the average value of each asset variable is shown for four quartile groups (ranked by asset index score).

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<sup>183</sup> This is easily explained in the case of gas/electric stoves, which are owned by as many as 54% of the households in Caiomete compared to a mere 6% in Braima Sori, despite the fact that the latter village is much wealthier. Reportedly, the Manjaco women of Caiomete – a relatively dense village – significantly appreciate the enhanced privacy afforded by the ability to cook indoors using a portable gas stove, and for that reason households are more likely to buy that item when they can afford it. In Braima Sori, by contrast, this does not seem to be considered an important benefit. Thus, as a consequence of the fact that the socially-constructed meaning and ‘utility’ of this household item differs between the two villages, most of the variation in reported ownership in the overall sample is not due to the underlying first component “long-run wealth” but rather to something else: presumably, the difference in the social meaning of the item itself. A similar effect occurs with respect to zinc rooftops, which are also very weakly correlated with the first principal component: the vast majority of the households in *both* villages report owning this item, and we find that, generally speaking, those households that do not own them are *not* the poorest ones (with respect to the other items), but rather households that for some other reason do not exhibit as strong a preference for zinc rooftops.

	Means					
	Score coefficient	Total	1st Quartile	2nd Quartile	3rd Quartile	4th Quartile
<b>Asset index</b>		0.0	-0,9104	-0,4627	-0,0352	1,4083
<b>Number of cows</b>	0,196	7.2	0.7	1.5	4	22.6
<b>Electricity</b>	0,127	18%	0%	4%	15%	52%
<b>Radio</b>	0,160	58%	4%	41%	89%	100%
<b>TV</b>	0,201	21%	0%	0	4%	81%
<b>Cell phone</b>	0,118	79%	37%	85%	96%	96%
<b>Bycicle</b>	0,146	52%	4%	33%	85%	85%
<b>Fridge</b>	0,193	9%	0%	0%	0%	37%
<b>Motorcycle</b>	0,194	11%	0%	0%	0%	44%
<b>Car</b>	0,155	7%	0%	0%	4%	26%
<b>Zinc rooftop</b>	0,073	93%	78%	100%	93%	100%
<b>Gas or electric stove</b>	-0,069	38%	56%	41%	37%	19%

**Table A4.5: Mean asset variables by quartile (in the sample of 108 households, ranked according to asset index)**

The Table above shows, for example, that none of the households in the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> quartiles own TVs, but 4% of the households in the 3<sup>rd</sup> quartile and 81% of those in the 4<sup>th</sup> quartile do. On average, households in the 1st quartile own less than one cow, but those in the 2nd, 3rd and 4th quartiles own, respectively, 1.5, 4 and 23 cows. Remarkably, the level of asset ownership increases monotonously by quartile in the case of all the asset variables except for zinc rooftop and gas/electric stove (which is accounted for by the reasons explained in footnote 183, above).

This provides additional evidence that the use of this procedure is appropriate, in the sense that the asset index thus computed constitutes a valid and consistent indicator of household wealth in the context of this research. The high level of association between the asset variables (shown by the high level of the KMO Measure in Table A1.2 and by the fact that the first principal component accounts for 34% of the variance) ensures that the PCA yields statistically significant weightings in the construction of the asset index, while the low absolute values of the score coefficients of such assets as gas/electric stove or zinc rooftop makes allowance for differences in the non-wealth social determinants of asset ownership in the two villages, without requiring us to compute two different asset indices. As a consequence of the latter, we may undertake inter-village comparisons of the level of wealth (Table A4.6), which indeed confirm that Braima Sori (with a mean asset index score of 0.87) is a much wealthier village than Caiomete (-0.43).

		Quartile Asset Index				Total
		1st Quartile	2nd Quartile	3 <sup>rd</sup> Quartile	4 <sup>th</sup> Quartile	
Village	Caiomete (mean = -0.43)	26	23	15	8	72
	Braima Sori (mean = 0.87)	1	4	12	19	36
Total (mean = 0)		27	27	27	27	108

Table A4.6: Number of households in each quartile (ranked by asset index score) in Caiomete and Braima Sori

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